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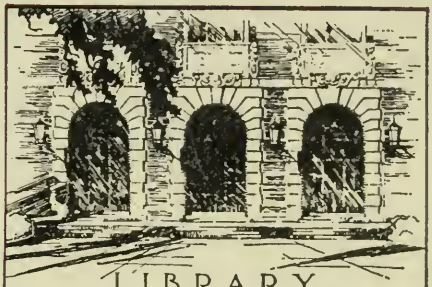

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MARGARET CAPEL.

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VOL. II.

MARGARET CAPEL.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MARGARET CAPEL.

CHAPTER I.

Where'er we gaze, above, around, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found!
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound;
And bluest skies that harmonise the whole.
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound,
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll,
Between those hanging rocks that shock yet please the soul.

BYRON.

THERE is a portion of the coast in one of the southern counties of England, which, without aspiring to the sublimity of foreign scenery, possesses a certain grandeur from the abruptness and variety of its outline. High cliffs stand boldly forward into the sea,

while the intermediate shore rises and falls in gentle and uncertain undulations. For many miles inland, this irregular character of the surface continues. The ground rises and falls so suddenly, that in many places the trees which clothe the tops of the hills, almost shut out the sky from the spectator in the valley; while many coloured rocks, vary by their wild forms and rich tints, the even line of verdure which extends over the precipitous sides of these ravines.

This part of the country is rich in scenes of peculiar beauty. Brooks trickle from the shade of deep thickets, or sparkle in stony cells overgrown with creepers at the foot of a confused heap of broken rocks.

Hill and dale crowd upon each other in quick succession—every turn in the way leads to fresh aspects of the prospect. Now the traveller's view is bounded by high banks, overgrown with trees and tangled brushwood; now the ground breaks away in such a gradual slope, that the sea may be discerned in the distance, trembling in

the sunshine, or breaking in rough foam upon the long brown line of the beach.

Half way between one of these bold headlands and the shore, there stood a beautiful cottage, with a thickly wooded hill at the back, and a highly cultivated plot of garden ground in the front: while the side of the house stood so near the edge of a sudden descent in the cliff, that nothing but a broad terrace-walk intervened between the garden-windows, and the abrupt declivity which was washed by the waves when the tide was higher than usual.

It was a brilliant evening. The sun had almost descended to the horizon, and a long pathway of golden light fell upon the calm sea, and the wet sand from which the waves had just receded.

A dim radiance seemed to fill the air, and to blend hills, trees, and sky together in one soft and many tinted confusion of colours; while the lengthened rays threaded their brilliant way among the slender stems of the trees, and dropped like diamonds

upon the dark rivulets that lay in shadow among the brushwood during the early part of the day.

It was an evening when the whole earth looked so bright, so costly, steeped in sunlight, and surrendered to the stillness which belongs to that quiet hour, that it seemed as if this lower world might be fitly inhabited only by fairies or other such fragile creatures of the imagination. Such, however, were not the denizens of the cottage by the hill-side; but a comely old lady in an antique cap and black silk gown, who had the appearance of a housekeeper, or confidential servant, and who was leaning over the gothic gate at the end of the shrubbery, and looking along the winding road, as if on the watch for some expected travellers.

Her patience was not put to any lengthened test. In a few minutes, a carriage was seen rapidly advancing to the house. The old woman retreated to the porch; the carriage drew up, and a lady of a

commanding aspect descended, followed by a slight graceful girl.

"Ah! nurse, dear nurse! how glad I am to see you!" exclaimed the young lady, throwing herself into the old woman's arms.

"Welcome to England! Welcome back, my darling!" said the nurse, endeavouring to execute a curtsey to the elder lady, while imprisoned in the embrace of the younger one.

"I am rejoiced to see you again, nurse Grant," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, the elder of the two ladies, "Aveline, my love, we are just in the way here—let us go in."

"Yes, mamma. I long to see the dear rooms again. How comfortable every thing looks! Nurse, come in. Mamma, you said that nurse should drink tea with us to-night."

"Yes, if nurse pleases," said the lady, as they went into the drawing-room, where tea was awaiting them in all the English delicacy of that meal. "Aveline has been depending on your

company all the way from Southampton, Mrs. Grant."

"Bless her, the darling!" said the old woman. "She is tired with her journey, is she not? I hope she means to eat something. A fresh egg, or some cold chicken, Miss Aveline?"

"Eat, nurse! you will see how I eat;" said the young lady drawing to the table. "I should be ashamed that anybody but you should see me eat after a long journey. I am so hungry!"

"Her appetite is very good," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, in a decided tone. "She is come back in every respect, nurse, better than she was. Her stay in Italy has been of the utmost advantage to her."

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Grant, looking earnestly at the young lady. "There is some good then in foreign parts."

"Oh, nurse!" cried Aveline. "Not a word against Italy. It is the only country to enjoy and improve life. If it were not

that this is our home, I could have spent my life at Naples, or—Sorrento."

"You were very fond of Sorrento," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, looking inquiringly at her daughter.

"Yes. That is, I was tired of it at last. It was a great relief to go on to Milan, there is something in the sea-side that—a monotony I mean—after—"

"Yet, you could have spent your life there;" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick in a subdued tone.

"In Italy, mamma? At any place in Italy. It is not the spot, but the thin warm air that makes me feel so full of life. Oh, dear nurse, you do look so handsome. You cannot think how ugly the old Italian women are, with their thick brown skins and deep wrinkles, and coarse grizzled hair. English people have certainly a more delicate texture. Even I was thought pretty in Italy."

"Pretty in Italy!" said the old lady

indignantly. "I fancy, Miss Aveline, the gentlemen must be much changed since my time, if you are not thought pretty anywhere."

"Oh, hush, nurse!" said Aveline lifting up her finger. "It is only safe to tell little children they are pretty. Grown up ones are too ready to believe it."

"It is little matter here, Miss Aveline," said the old woman. "You have no neighbours."

"No neighbours, nurse? I was but waiting until we had finished tea to ask you about them all. How is the good old widow by the church—and Mrs. Wood, the baker—and young Mrs. Wood at the post-office? And Harding, the carpenter—and the fisherman's family on the other side of the cliff? Is little Jane as pretty as ever? Of course not. Her father I know has cut all her curls off, as he always does, and she is beginning to lose her teeth; so that she will not be fit to look at for these ten years."

While she was talking on in this lively

manner, the old woman kept her eyes fixed on her face with a serious and anxious expression.

Aveline was fearfully thin; her hands, which she used in speaking, more than an English woman, were almost transparent; and from fatigue, the blue veins had risen over them in every direction. The colour in her cheeks was fixed like a bright spot of rouge under each eye, giving a brilliancy that was almost fierce in its expression to eyes that were dark as night, and remarkable for their size.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who followed the nurse's looks with an eagerness that she could scarcely repress, caught her eye and remained silent, fixing her gaze upon the old woman's countenance with an intensity that she could hardly sustain. It seemed as if she ardently desired to read the nurse's opinion of her child, but was equally anxious that she should not then express it.

"Well, nurse," said Aveline, "what news? I hope all these good people are not dead,

that you keep such a profound silence upon their proceedings."

"All pretty much as you left them, Miss Aveline," said the nurse, rousing herself from her contemplation. "I cannot speak positively with respect to the beauty of the fisherman's children; though I always see three or four curly heads round his door when I pass. He lost one poor little one in the winter with the hooping cough. The neighbours said it was a mercy, as he had such a large family, but I don't know that the parents felt the less on that account."

"Poor people!" said Aveline. "I'll tell you what, mamma, I shall get up early to-morrow, and go down to the cottage with Susan, and buy some prawns for breakfast; and then I shall see what the children would like as a present. I am always so glad when people are in want of nice clean little straw bonnets. There is nothing romantic in giving away flannel petticoats or thick worsted stockings."

"Remember, Miss Aveline," said the

nurse, " that you give away a great deal of comfort with those warm clothes."

" And if you intend to take a long walk to-morrow," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, " you had better not sit up later to night. You have had a long journey, and should be prudent ; though you bore it remarkably well."

But Aveline was unwilling to retire. Although she was evidently suffering from over fatigue, she persisted in wandering restlessly round the room, looking at all the trifling ornaments with which it was strewn. Mrs Grant noticed with pain that her step was languid, and that she stooped very much as she walked. Presently she was seized with a distressing fit of coughing.

" A lozenge, if you please, Mamma, " said Aveline, coming up to her mother's chair.

" Now Aveline I know you are tired," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, " take your lozenges and go to bed at once. She always coughs," she said turning to Mrs. Grant, " when she is over fatigued. She always did from a child."

"Come, Miss Aveline," said Mrs. Grant, "I am going home in a minute—le tme see you off. Dear heart! how I recollect the time when you were a little girl; what a trouble there always was to get you to bed."

"Why what particular secrets have you good people to talk over that you wish me away ?" said Aveline laughing, "what account have you to give mamma of the turkey poults and the guinea fowls that I may not hear? But, good night, nurse; you will have me plaguing you early to morrow, at your cottage, and pillaging your strawberry beds, which you know are a great deal better than ours. As for you, mamma, I shall not say good night, because you will be upstairs long before I am asleep."

"Her spirits are excellent, nurse," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, in a tone that seemed as if she was desirous to be assured of the fact.

"They are—very high, Ma'am;" said Mrs. Grant.

"How do you think she is looking?" asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"I shall tell better to morrow, Ma'am," said the old woman with rather an unsteady voice; "I should like, I confess to see her looking a little less thin."

"She was always thin as a child if you remember, Mrs. Grant, and when a girl grows very tall, she naturally grows thin at the same time. I think nothing of that."

"No, no, Ma'am," said Mrs. Grant cheerfully, "young girls will look thin sometimes."

"She was very ill at Nice you know; the north-east wind brought back her cough and frightened us very much. And we had a desponding kind of a man as our medical attendant. There is nothing so unfavourable to an invalid as one of those over-anxious people about them. But, you see, now the weather is warm she is getting on nicely."

Mrs. Grant felt her hopes sinking fast away before the news that the medical

man's opinion was an unfavourable one. She thought it a bad sign that he should despond, where no particular interest led him to exaggerate the case.

"You can have no idea," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "of what we suffered at Nice. You have heard of the prejudice the Italians entertain against any illness that they consider to be of a consumptive tendency. And Aveline having something of a cough—in short, Mrs. Grant, they fancied that my poor child was in a decline; and when she was at the worst, they took fright, and ordered us out of our lodgings at a moment's notice. Aveline was too ill to travel —our hostess was peremptory—and I knew well that no other house would take us in. It was then that a country-woman of ours, a Mrs. Maxwell Dorset, hearing of our distress, sought us out, and instantly offered us apartments in her house. It was impossible to stand on ceremony at such a time. I accepted her kindness, and had we been

her nearest relatives, we could not have been more warmly welcomed nor more carefully attended."

"Thank God that you are safe again on English ground," said the old nurse; "where, at least, we do not turn sick people into the streets, the Pagans! And Heaven reward the good lady who took compassion on you in your need."

And so saying, Mrs. Grant took her departure.

As soon as Mrs. Fitzpatrick was alone, she sat down before her writing case, and leaning her head on her hand seemed lost in thought. She had but few and distant relations, and since her widowhood had lived in such retirement, that except two or three neighbouring families she numbered as few friends. She had in early life, lived much in the world; but having withdrawn into solitude, the world had paid her the usual compliment, and forgotten her existence. She had lost several children when very young, and all her affections centred

upon this only girl whose health was so precarious. She wrote a few lines to a medical man of some eminence who lived a few miles off, to announce her return, and to beg that he would lose no time in paying them a visit.

"It is best to be upon the safe side;" she said to herself, "Aveline is gaining strength; but Mr. Lindsay may point out some means that would escape me. He is so clever, and has known her constitution from a child. I am sure he will think she is improved by her residence abroad."

So saying she rose to retire for the night; and casting her eyes round the room, she saw lying about, Aveline's gloves, her handkerchief and scarf, which she had thrown aside and forgotten, with the carelessness of youth. These she gathered up and folded together with that indiscribable air of tenderness, which, in a mother, sometimes extends itself to the trifles that her child has worn or touched; and then went up stairs to take a last look at Aveline—and to sleep, if she could.

CHAPTER II.

Mighty power, all powers above !
Great unconquerable Love !
Thou who liest in dimple sleek,
On the tender virgin's cheek :
Thee the rich and great obey ;
Every creature owns thy sway.
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the main
Extends thy universal reign.

SOPHOCLES.

PERHAPS few things are more curious to those who, as bystanders, contemplate the game of life, than to see how in the stream of time, persons the most divided, and the least likely to be brought into contact, are whirled by those resistless waves nearer and nearer, until at last they meet ; or if no col-

lision takes place, still the course of the one, draws into its channel, or modifies in some strange way the course of the other.

Margaret little thought as she sat dreaming over her lot at Ashdale, that a sick girl in another county, whom she had never seen, and whose name she had never heard, was to exercise a strange influence over her future fate.

Mr. Haveloc was constantly at Ashdale. He went, it is true, backwards and forwards from his own place to that of Mr. Grey, but his visits to his home were wonderfully short, and those at Ashdale longer and longer. His attention, his devotion to Margaret increased daily ; she never had occasion to form a wish. He seemed to divine all her thoughts, to anticipate everything that she could by possibility enjoy. And his was especially the kind of character to interest her ; his failings were not of a nature to come in her way, and the earnestness of his disposition suited her ideas of the romance of love. She was not likely to mistake

a devotion that knew no pause, that entertained no other idea than herself day after day.

Then his knowledge, which though rather desultory, was unusual in a man who had not to earn his living—his command of languages, his accomplishments—all things that he never cared to bring forward, but that accident discovered to her by degrees, increased his power over her mind.

Men cannot forgive acquirement in a woman, though they will sometimes pardon a sort of natural cleverness; but it is a common story that women are swayed by genius or learning in a man.

Margaret was hardly aware of the impatience of his temper, which he never showed except to Mr. Casement, when she fully sympathised with him; but she daily noticed his attention to her uncle, his anxiety about his health, and the readiness with which he would give up his evenings to amuse his old friend. All that she had heard of him before their acquaintance was merged into the facts which were to his ad-

vantage. She remembered the defence of the lady and her daughter in Calabria. She forgot all about Mrs. Maxwell Dorset.

At first, after her rejection of Hubert Gage, she was a good deal annoyed and distressed by his perseverance. He called on Mr. Grey, he wrote to her, he described himself as distracted, herself as mistaken. He was determined to believe that they were made for each other; and that Margaret was under some strong delusion when she did not think as he did on that subject. Margaret began to dread and dislike the very name of Hubert Gage; she feared to meet him in her walks; every ring at the bell gave her the apprehension that he was coming to see her. And whether it was his youth or his disposition, that must be blamed for the fact, he acted very unreasonably in the affair. He did not take his disappointment at all like a philosopher; and to crown everything, when Captain Gage had with infinite difficulty procured him a ship, he declined the appointment,

upon some trivial excuse, and persisted in remaining in the neighbourhood; to the great vexation of his family, and the annoyance of Margaret.

At last he was persuaded to accompany his brother who was returning to Ireland; and then Margaret had an interval of peace. She was able to see Elizabeth whenever she pleased; and Mr. Grey left off pitying poor Hubert, when he no longer saw him passing the house, or looking disconsolate at church.

As Margaret had no female companion, her natural delicacy of feeling told her that she ought never to be alone with Mr. Haveloc: but those quiet evenings were almost tête-à-tête when her uncle slept in his easy chair, and she sat working by the fire, with Mr. Haveloc always by her side, talking or reading to her in a low voice, or making her speak Italian, and playfully correcting her mistakes.

And when the spring mellowed into summer, and Mr. Grey had his chair moved to

the large window that opened upon the broad terrace, Mr. Haveloc would persuade Margaret to pace up and down the walk, always in sight, though not in hearing, of her kind uncle, whose great delight was to watch them as they passed and repassed.

The moon had risen, and gleamed brightly behind one of the dark cedars upon the lawn. Part of the smooth turf was almost whitened by its peculiar light, while the trees cast their inky shadows forward upon the grass. Every flower, half closed and hung with dew, gave forth its sweetest fragrance.

"And you like sunlight really better than this, Mr. Haveloc?" said Margaret, as they paused to look upon the landscape.

"Good honest sunlight—strong enough to steep everything in mist, I really do," replied Mr. Haveloc.

"You are thinking of Italy?"

"No; of English sunshine. I never think of Italy."

These last words were spoken as if he

meant to infer that there was something a great deal more attractive than Italy in her near neighbourhood.

Her hand was resting on his arm; he pressed it, and she did not attempt to withdraw it. She felt, no doubt respecting his love; he expressed it in his manner, and she was sure he would not act a falsehood. It was all under her uncle's eye, and if he had disapproved of it, he would have put a stop to it before now. It made her perfectly happy, and a little frightened only when she thought he was on the point of saying something decisive. She would so gladly have gone on exactly as they were then.

"This is very pretty," said Mr. Haveloc, as they again paused opposite to the dark mournful cedars.

"Oh, beautiful!" returned Margaret. "If there were but some old oaks about the place: but those ash-trees in the meadow near the copse—those are really splendid, are they not?"

"Very fine! When I was staying here as Mr. Grey's ward, I believe I used to sketch those trees once a week."

"I wish I could sketch!"

"Do you? I have no respect for the arts; I had rather a person should appreciate pictures than paint them."

"But do you not think painting them helps one to appreciate them?"

"I think it teaches one to know the difficulties, but not to feel the sentiment."

"Uncle Grey, do you smell the Chinese honeysuckle?" asked Margaret, pausing before the window.

"Yes my love; it is very strong to-night."

"Are you ready for your tea, uncle?"

"I shall be in about ten minutes, my dear."

"Can you guess ten minutes, Mr. Haveloc?"

Mr. Haveloc looked at his watch, and could not distinguish the figures. Margaret

thought she could see better. He held the watch to her—she pored over it in vain.

"You must guess it now, Mr. Haveloc."

"Mr. Grey is not very particular," said Mr. Haveloc, "I think I may venture."

They walked on to the end of the terrace.

"Do you recollect one day when I kept the dinner waiting," said Mr. Haveloc.

"Oh, yes! I remember, said Margaret with a sigh—it was the day that had begun her troubles with Hubert Gage. "Mr. Casement was so cross because he could not fathom your business with Mr. Grey."

"What a long deliverance we have had from the old monster," said Mr Haveloc.

"Oh, yes! I was so glad when—" Margaret stopped short.

"When he was laid up with the rheumatism," added Mr. Haveloc, laughing.

"Oh, no! not exactly. One ought not to be glad of that; but really, I think I

rejoiced that anything kept him out of the way."

"Gessina is growing quite fat," said Mr. Haveloc, as the beautiful creature bounded towards them.

"Stop! I am going to carry her," said Margaret stooping down.

"Cannot you trust me to do that?" asked Mr. Haveloc.

"No; because I am going to wrap her in a corner of my shawl."

"Stay, do not give her too much," said Mr. Haveloc, assisting in the distribution of the shawl, "you must take care of yourself, in the evening air.

"She has had so much running about to-day," said Margaret.

"Yes, I saw you taking her out to exercise this morning, before breakfast."

"Did you? When we were on the lawn?"

"Yes, with that Indian-rubber ball you made her a present of."

"You laugh, but it is a capital ball for Gessina to play with."

"I thought Gessina and her mistress both seemed to enjoy it very much."

"I did not know you were up then, Mr. Haveloc."

"I had not left my room, I confess."

"How very idle!"

"Oh, it was! but then I had been sitting up half the night."

"What a strange fancy of yours."

"I was writing letters."

"What! with all the day before you?"

"I like to spend the day in your company."

Here a low growl that seemed hardly human, made both start violently. Margaret dropped Gessina. Mr. Haveloc turned sharply round.

"Ugh! little woman; are you going to give us tea to-night?" growled Mr. Casement.

"Oh, dear yes, Sir. I declare I did not

know what time it was," said Margaret hastily.

"There is not the slightest hurry," said Mr. Haveloc detaining Margaret by the hand, "there can be no possible occasion for you to make tea before the usual time."

Margaret looked up in deprecation of his contemptuous tone. Mr. Casement turned to hobble back to the house.

"Ugh, sweethearts!" he grumbled, as he left them.

Margaret blushed crimson. Mr. Haveloc still holding her hand, walking slowly and silently in the same direction. At last, in that calm voice which in people of impatient temper always marks strong emotion, he said:—

"He is right Margaret—I love you!"

Margaret was excessively agitated—she trembled violently; but the transparent candour of her nature did not now desert her. In a faultering tone she replied:—

"I thought so."

"Come along, little woman," said Mr. Casement as Margaret stepped in at the window. "It is well I am come among you again. Poor uncle is laid on the shelf now; that's very plain."

"Did I keep you waiting, uncle?" said Margaret softly as she took her place before the urn.

"No, my love, never mind what he says. You know his ways by this time."

"Come, sit down, youngster, and don't make a fuss. Take it easy," said Mr. Casement addressing Mr. Haveloc, who was behind Margaret's chair.

Margaret ventured to cast an imploring glance at Mr. Haveloc, who regarded Mr. Casement as if he should like to reduce him to ashes; but being unprovided with any apparatus for this ceremony, he sat down beside Margaret, without making any reply.

It seemed as if Mr. Casement would never go that evening. He wrangled

through one game of piquet after another; at last he got up. "Well, good night Master Grey," he said, "if you are blindfolded, I am not. Those young ones have been muttering at the window there, ever since we sat down to cards."

"What is it Claude?" asked Mr. Grey, as soon as Mr. Casement had gone.

Mr. Haveloc told him what it was. Margaret laid her head on her uncle's shoulder —he put his arm round her waist. "Well then, Claude," he said, "your best plan is to set off to-morrow morning; the sooner you go, the sooner you will come back."

Margaret looked up with a face suddenly blanched even to her lips. "What—go away—leave me, uncle?" she said. Her voice failed her; almost her breath; she had not believed it possible that they should ever be parted.

Mr. Grey explained to Margaret as he had before explained to Mr. Haveloc his reasons for insisting on this measure.

When he had finished, she burst into one

of those paroxysms of tears that she only gave way to under very strong emotion. Mr. Haveloc hung over her chair in speechless distress. Mr. Grey endeavoured in the tenderest manner to moderate her agitation.

"You see, my child," he said, "you are but seventeen, and very young for your age; and this fellow here, somewhere about two-and-twenty. It is very important you should both know your own minds a little more clearly than you can do now. In such serious affairs, it is right to be very cautious. You see, my dear little girl, what day of the month is it? You see, a year soon passes; and next 14th of June, he will be here again."

Margaret checked her tears, and tried to reward his efforts with a smile.

"Well, then, Claude, you and I must have a little conversation together. Wish him good night, my child; you had better part now and not see each other to-morrow morning. It is wisest, is it not Claude?

There give her a kiss and have done with it. That's good children!"

Margaret was speechless with grief: the last words Mr. Haveloc addressed to her as he led her to the door, were, "If I ever bestow a thought upon another, forget me; I can invoke no heavier curse upon my head."

CHAPTER III.

Ansel. His food—sharp sorrow, ever galling doubt,
Fear, that aye nettles near the core of love—
And long suspense that maketh faint the heart;
Patience it may be, and much jealousy,
And all that fretteth youth to timeless age.
Isa. And what the recompence?
Ansel. To sleep awhile;
Dreaming of fairy worlds bestrewn with flowers.
And close companionship of equal hearts;
Warm, faultless, kind, unspotted, human hearts!
Of hope so bright, as never felt a care,
And love, that if care was, would smile it down.
Then wake—like Ariadne on the shore,
To battle with the tempest—but alone!

ANON.

AVELINE was up the next morning as early as she had threatened; and with the restlessness peculiar to her complaint, she was not content with a walk to the fisher-

man's cottage to buy prawns, but when she returned, finding that it still wanted some minutes to breakfast time, she wandered out into the garden, and began working at the flower-beds.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was perfectly astonished when she came down to find her daughter weeding and hoeing, in her straw bonnet and garden gloves.

"I really cannot help it, mamma," was Aveline's reply to Mrs. Fitzpatrick's remonstrances; "it is so pleasant to feel better, that I could not resist a little independance of action. I have made your petunias look quite another thing."

"Here are some beautiful strawberries, Aveline," said her mother, "if you go out rambling to-day you must fortify yourself with a good breakfast."

"Yes! not strawberries, mamma. I will try some prawns. Jane's brother caught these. Tom. I don't know if you have ever seen him. There are two Toms. The other one is a cousin, and not nearly

so good as the real Tom, Brand's eldest boy. I am afraid the other Tom is rather suspected of smuggling; but then what a temptation. This is just the coast for adventure."

"But all this time, Aveline, you are eating nothing," said her mother, looking anxiously at the trembling hands with which she held her tea-cup.

"Presently, mamma. I always need a little self-encouragement before I begin anything so important as breakfast. No, I think I will not venture on the prawns. I will take some strawberries; they are too fine to be wasted. I am going to have some cream with them—to make quite a feast, as the little children call it. And now, mamma, you must have one half, and I will take the other."

Aveline having divided the strawberries, tasted them, and they shared the same fate with the prawns; then she broke a delicate crust off the little loaf, and having tasted that, declared that she had finished her

breakfast, and that as soon as Mark could clear away, she meant to sit down to her drawing for a little while.

"You must not undertake too much; Aveline," said her mother. "Remember that you can only expect to get well by degrees."

Aveline laughed and brought forward her portfolio to select a sketch.

"This is the one I wished to finish, mamma," she said. "Brand's cottage, with all those good masses of rock behind it, and the nets and children at the door. I sketched it before I went abroad."

"Let me rub your colours for you," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, taking a cake from her daughter's unsteady hand.

"Thank you, mamma. I am really very idle to let you do it for me," said Aveline, setting to work hurriedly. "I feel at home with my pencil. I wish I could model a little better. There is something so incomplete in all my busts; but that must be a consideration for the future. When I get

strong, I shall delight in improving myself in sculpture."

"My love, that is the last thing I am anxious about," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "You do already much more than most girls, and most grown women. Whatever study you have pursued, you know thoroughly."

"Yes, to a certain point; but how much I have before me. There is such a pleasure in acquiring knowledge."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was turning over her daughter's portfolio.

"Where is that beautiful drawing, Aveline, which I used to think your best? That part of the coast, near Sorrento, at low water."

"I have not kept it, mamma."

"Did you give it away, my dear?" asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick with a smile. For it was at Sorrento that Mr. Haveloc had been very much with them; and, during the progress of the drawing, as he was very fond of the art, and a pretty good draughts-

man himself, he had often interfered, greatly to the benefit of the picture, as Aveline then declared.

"No, mamma," said Aveline, after a pause.

"Have you lost it then?" asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick, thinking it not unlikely that Mr. Haveloc might have stolen it as a remembrance of the hours they had passed together.

"No, mamma," said Aveline speaking very distinctly, but with much effort. "I destroyed it."

"And why, dearest?"

"I thought it wisest, mamma," said Aveline, going rapidly on with her drawing.

"Dear Aveline," said her mother, taking her in her arms. "Now that we are at home, and at rest—are you unhappy?"

"No, no, indeed, mamma!" said Aveline, hiding her face upon her mother's shoulder. "Not unhappy! Nobody can tell but myself how deeply I have longed for home and

rest; often, when I have thought I should never rest again."

"But how was that, my Aveline?"

"It was not that I did not despise myself every day and every hour for my folly," said Aveline, plunging at once into the confession that she had often longed to make. "It was no cherished weakness, you will believe that, mamma."

"I do, my dear."

"And it was not because he defended us from the brigands. I know it is common enough for men to be brave. But then he thought so little of it—he always made so light of it; and we should have never known he had been wounded, if his man had not told our courier, when we met at Sorrento."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick pressed her daughter's hand.

"And then seeing him day by day at Sorrento; although he never said any thing that might lead me to think he noticed me more than a sick child. Always so kind—

more than attentive; so vigilant that I should not be fatigued. So active in choosing resting places for us on the shore, and finding views for sketching; and I watching every time he spoke for some word that might show I was as much treasured in his secret heart, as he was in mine;—it was almost too hard. Oh! how glad I was when he left Sorrento. And yet it seemed so dreary that I was glad to go too. Then, I had nothing to do but to forget all that was past; and that was hard. There was that drawing—he had helped me with the sky, and most of the distance. I destroyed that, when I found myself always looking at it; and the cornelian amulet, that he used to laugh at me for wearing. I gave it to Mrs. Maxwell Dorset, you remember."

"Mrs. Maxwell Dorset said that he had made her acquaintance at Florence, did she not?" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, anxious to lead her daughter to talk of this, as of an indifferent subject.

"Yes," she said, "he was a great pet

of hers. He gave her that bracelet of purple enamel with the diamond head. I should be very sorry to be ungrateful mamma, but I thought—"

"What, my dearest?"

"I thought a woman should be very old, to talk as she used to do about Mr. Haveloc and Mr. Leslie. I saw a great deal of her you know, when you were out arranging our journey home with Johannot."

"I should be sorry to see you imitate that, or any other freedom of manner," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "because I consider it very ungraceful; but I am persuaded that with Mrs. Maxwell Dorset, it was only manner. Mr. Leslie you know was a clergyman, and Mrs. Maxwell says she never likes to be without the intimate acquaintance of a clergyman. She considers it so advantageous both for herself; and for her children. Mr. Leslie came twice a week to explain the bible to her girls."

This was true enough; but Aveline remembered that Mrs. Maxwell Dorset's

remarks about Mr. Leslie, who was really a most excellent and earnest young man in the discharge of his duty, had been confined to repeated eulogiums upon his teeth, and his hands, and had never touched upon the doctrines which he wished to inculcate.

She said, however, that Mrs. Maxwell Dorset had been most kind to them when they most needed it; and that she should be very sorry to form a harsh judgment of her foibles. And then having talked too long upon subjects of an exciting nature, she brought on a severe fit of coughing, which Mrs. Fitzpatrick attributed to her having bent so much over her drawing.

"It is very odd we cannot get rid of that cough of yours, Aveline," she said. "Here comes Mr. Lindsay, we must consult with him about it."

Aveline was flushed with coughing, and her eyes sparkled with pleasure at the sight of her great favourite, Mr. Lindsay; so that when he dismounted, and came in at the open window, he could hardly be

expected to detect through the eagerness of her warm welcome, any strong trace of indisposition.

"Nothing the matter with you, I see!" were his first words to her.

"Indeed, there is, Mr. Lindsay," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "There is still something left for you to do with her. She cannot be quite right with that troublesome cough." And Mrs. Fitzpatrick fixed her black eyes upon Mr. Lindsay's immoveable countenance, with a scrutiny that it was not easy to avoid.

"I wish you would not feel my pulse, doctor," said Aveline, using a term she often playfully applied to Mr. Lindsay. "It always makes me faint."

"There then," said he removing his fingers, "you have not left any of your fancies behind you. I wish you had, or your cough!"

"You despise foreigners almost as much as Mrs. Grant," said Aveline laughing; "but

you cannot deny that I have gained a great deal by my absence."

"Gained. Yes; an inch or more. Were you not tall enough before you went?" said Mr. Lindsay, surveying her from head to foot.

"You are as tiresome as ever," said Aveline. "I have gained strength, spirits, and appetite!"

"What did you eat for breakfast?" asked Mr. Lindsay suddenly.

"Oh! breakfast. That is never a good meal with me. I could eat half a chicken for dinner," said Aveline, still laughing.

"Well, I suppose you want me to send you some medicine," said Mr. Lindsay, taking up his hat; "people are never contented without it, whether they need it or not."

"But do I not need it?" asked Aveline.

"No."

"What shall I take for my cough then?"

"Cherries, shrimps, tamarinds, whatever you like."

"And why are you running away?"

"Because I am going to see a woman who really wants me and my physic."

"Anybody I know?"

"A Mrs. Brand. I cannot tell how far your circle of acquaintance may extend."

"To be sure I know her. Brand's wife mamma! She is always sickly. Do you think her worse?"

"Why, yes—rather."

"And will she get well?"

"Perhaps. I am doubtful about it."

"Oh, dear! with all those poor little children."

"She would be much more likely to get well without the poor little children."

"And what could we send her that would be of use?"

"Chicken broth, port wine, brandy, if she could keep it from her husband."

"Oh, yes! he is a very good man. He never drinks."

"Excellent. Good bye to you," and the doctor stepped out upon the terrace. Mrs. Fitzpatrick followed him.

"What do you think of her, Mr.Lindsay?" she asked.

"I hardly know yet. I am not quite satisfied with her pulse; but I must see her when she has recovered the fatigue of her journey."

"And have you no advice to give me in the meantime?"

"Care—care—care. You know my axiom," said the doctor as he mounted his horse. "A better one I warrant, than that of Demosthenes."

"But you are really oracular this morning."

"Keep her mind quiet," said Mr. Lindsay gathering up the bridle, "and if she cries for the moon, let her have it."

And having given utterance to this easy and infallible receipt, galloped off.

Yes, it was very pleasant to be told that she must keep her daughter's mind quiet, when she had just learned that Aveline was engaged in one long hopeless struggle against an attachment that had never been declared, or sought, or requited.

It had often crossed her mind at Sorrento, that Mr. Haveloc must admire her daughter; but she had never alluded to the subject, even in jest; because hers was a mind to treat all grave matters gravely; and because she did not think it very conducive to the delicacy of a young girl to jest with her upon the impression she might have made upon a man, particularly while the fact was yet uncertain. And she believed that Aveline never gave him a thought; nor did she herself, farther th anshe need, take an trouble to keep them out of each other's way, because there would be no reason to object to it, if they should take a fancy to each other.

How deeply she repented of her blindness; how bitterly she recalled the frequent morn-

ing walks, the sketching, the sailing parties; from which, indeed, she could hardly have excluded Mr. Haveloc, all things considered; but from which she might have contrived to omit Aveline. She gazed down the rough pathway from which Mr. Lindsay had long vanished, and again repeated to herself, "Keep her mind quiet!"

CHAPTER IV.

They ben so well thewed and so wise
Whatever that good old man bespake.

SPENSER.

Might'st thou perceive austerely in his eye
That he did plead in earnest, yea or no?
Look'd he, or red, or pale, or sad, or merrily?
What observation mad'st thou in this case,

SHAKESPEARE.

Nothing more endeared Margaret to her uncle, than the manner in which she took Mr. Haveloc's departure.

A little more grave, a little more silent than usual, she seemed only solicitous that Mr. Grey should not miss his companionship more than could be helped. She had not an instant's fear that his affection would undergo any change; her regrets at parting

with him were unmixed with doubt for the future; they were simply those of separating for so long from a person whom she loved.

One evening, when she was leaning upon Mr. Grey's arm-chair, placed as usual at the window, with the moonlight streaming over the grounds, much as when she had taken her last walk upon the terrace with Mr. Haveloc, her uncle seemed to think he might touch upon the subject without exciting her feelings too painfully.

"You are thinking of Claude, my love," said he taking her hand which rested on the back of his chair, and drawing it down over his shoulder.

"Yes uncle," said Margaret.

"Very natural," returned Mr. Grey. "I dare say he is thinking of you."

"I think he is," replied Margaret quietly.

"He agreed not to write to you, you know, my dear," said her uncle; "but I promised him one thing which might look

like an infringement of our compact. If my health should become materially worse, a letter directed to Tynebrook will be forwarded to him, wherever he may be, and he will come to us immediately; so that if I should be too ill to write, Margaret, you will know what to do. It is right if you are deprived of one protector, that I should procure you another."

"Oh! uncle, if you would not talk—if you would not imagine such things," said Margaret, melting into tears.

"Well, my dear child, I will not say any more about it; we will change the subject. What do you think? The last night Claude was with me, I told him that it was my intention to leave my estate, with some few reservations, to you. Well—but don't cry at that, my child: I never heard that any man died the sooner for making his will. But Claude decidedly opposed my intention; he said, his own fortune was so ample as to make so large an addition to it quite unnecessary; that he disapproved the plan

of heaping up those immense properties; that my estate would be the means of making some other relative easy in his circumstances; and that he thought he was speaking your sentiments as well as his own, when he resolutely declined my offer."

"Quite. He understands me," whispered Margaret through her tears.

"So then, Margaret, if he stands the test of time, you may be very happy together," said Mr. Grey.

"If!—oh, uncle! I have not a doubt."

"Do not have," said Mr. Grey. "Trust always, my child; but here comes the urn, and Casement too, I declare."

"Hollo! little woman, where's Master Claude?" was Mr. Casement's first salutation, after he had carefully peeped on each side of the urn, as if in search of the missing gentleman.

"Gone, Sir; several days ago," said Margaret, pursuing her occupation.

"Gone, eh? And where?"

"I don't know, Sir."

"Not in his confidence then, it seems."

"Think of that, Mr. Casement," said Margaret, looking up with an arch laugh.

"How was it?" asked Mr. Casement, dragging his chair as close to hers as possible, "tell me all about it. Did Master Grey cut up rough?"

Margaret looked puzzled, for she did not understand the phrase employed; but she turned to her uncle.

"Did you, Uncle Grey?" she said.

"He does not know what he is talking about, my dear," said Mr. Grey.

"Don't I?" said Mr. Casement. "You thought, little woman, that I did not know any of your proceedings with Master Hubert."

"I did not think about it, Sir," said Margaret, turning away.

"I suppose Elizabeth Gage has quite cut you now?" pursued Mr. Casement.

"No, she has not, Sir; for I dine at Chirke Weston to-morrow."

"Then give my love to her," said Mr.

Casement; "and tell her that I have held her engaged to me for the last ten years. I don't know when I shall claim her, but it is as well to remind her occasionally."

When she arrived at Captain Gage's next day, Elizabeth was alone in the drawing-room, dressed with her usual costly simplicity.

She was seated reading in an arm-chair by the open window, and Margaret could not help being newly struck with the grand and statuesque style of her beauty. From her height, the calm regularity of her features, the plain arrangement of her abundant hair, and the dignity of her attitude, she might have served as a model for Minerva.

Elizabeth's welcome was as warm as ever.

"You will find my father in a great bustle," said she, as soon as Margaret was seated. "Sir Philip d'Eyncourt has arrived. You have heard of him?"

"Yes; I have heard his name," said Margaret.

"He has come home in very bad health," said Elizabeth, "and has been obliged to abandon a survey which he considered of great importance, and for which he was peculiarly fitted from his scientific knowledge. My father quite enjoys the idea of having somebody to take care of. He pets *me*; but I never have anything the matter with me."

Captain Gage now came into the room, shook hands with Margaret, and assured her that she was looking remarkably well; and then told his daughter that Sir Philip would be down presently; that he had insisted on their not delaying dinner: that he was looking very ill, but that Bessy must not judge of him from his present appearance. And then he hurried out again to see how his guest was getting on.

Elizabeth Gage had not seen Sir Philip d'Eyncourt since she was a child. She re-

membered then that he had taken great notice of her, as young men are apt to do of handsome children. But her impressions of him, dated not from the scanty recollections she entertained of himself, but from the very high opinion that her father always expressed of his talents and character.

Her father never threw away his praise; therefore, Sir Philip must be everything that was admirable.

She wished very much to see him, and become acquainted with him, but she recognised him completely as her father's guest; and though she would gladly have shown her respect for his character, by contributing in any way to his comfort, yet she thought that as an invalid, and, in some respects, a disappointed man, the most agreeable thing for him was to be let alone.

"I am quite anxious to see him after so many years," said Elizabeth, turning slightly towards the door as her father and his guest entered.

Sir Philip was tall and dark; with a head like the portraits in Elizabeth's reign. Wide across the brows, and narrow at the chin. He was very grave and quiet in his manner; seemed in wretched health; sat down without speaking, after having bowed to the two ladies, and remained perfectly still and silent in a corner of the sofa.

"You can hardly recollect Bessy, I suppose," said Captain Gage, turning to Sir Philip.

"No; it is so many years since I had the pleasure of seeing Miss Gage," said he, turning his eyes in the direction of Elizabeth, who was showing Margaret some specimens of carved ivory at a table.

She coloured a little; but she reflected that there was nothing to wonder at in his memory being worse than her own. He had seen many pretty children; she had seen but one Sir Philip d'Eyncourt.

"Do you think Bessy like Hubert" asked Captain Gage, who seemed resolved

not to let Sir Philip alone on the subject of his daughter.

Sir Philip did not see the likeness.

"Now that vexes me, Sir Philip," said Elizabeth, looking up with her usual candour. "I am very fond of being considered like Hubert."

Sir Philip smiled, but made no reply.

"You think so, do you not?" asked Captain Gage of Margaret, with a mischievous smile.

This was rather hard upon her; she blushed very deeply, and assented.

Captain Gage enjoyed her confusion. He was as kind to her as ever: he would have liked her to marry Hubert, because his son had set his heart upon it; and he was very well pleased that it had come to nothing, because he thought the boy a great deal too young to think of settling. It would, indeed, have been difficult to disturb his equanimity. In the days of George's extravagance, he paid his bills with a com-

posure that made that gentleman's intimate friends wish that Heaven had provided them with father's exactly on the same pattern; and he took all Hubert's perverseness, after the first irritation, with the greatest forbearance; only begging that he might be informed when it was his pleasure to go to sea again, as he did not wish a second time to exert his influence for nothing.

Dinner was announced; Captain Gage took possession of Margaret, and Elizabeth knowing that Sir Philip must offer her his arm, with a slight colour, a slight embarrassment that became her infinitely, went towards him to save him the exertion of crossing to her side of the room. He met her with a smile that seemed at once to comprehend, and to be grateful for her consideration.

The thing that Captain Gage most ardently desired on earth was the marriage of Elizabeth with Sir Philip; but this wish he very prudently kept to himself. He

was very glad to see that she had on her cameos and her white silk, and that her hair was dressed to admiration ; for the rest, it might, he thought, be safely left to time.

"I should like you to see Creswick," said Captain Gage, "it is for sale ; if you would buy it, we should be sure of a pleasant neighbour. I will drive you over there to-morrow."

"Thank you," said Sir Philip, "it would be an inducement ; but I believe I must content myself with Sherleigh."

"Sherleigh, is magnificent I know ;" said Captain Gage, "but Creswick would be just the thing for a shooting-box. Are you fond of shooting ? Oh ! I recollect having many a day's sport with you in Antigua."

"Parrot shooting ;" said Sir Philip, "there was no great skill required there. No ; I have outlived my taste for field sports."

"You had only to fire into a tree, and they came down like cock-chaffers," said Captain Gage, turning to Margaret. "Why Bessy, what makes you in such a hurry ?"

Elizabeth rose to leave the room ; and when her father joined her in the drawing-room, he brought a civil message from Sir Philip, that he regretted not seeing Miss Gage again, but that his physician had enjoined him to retire early.

CHAPTER V.

But good with ill, and pleasure still with pain
Like Heaven's revolving signs, alternate reign.

TRACHINIA.

Life of my love—throne where my glories sit,
I ride in triumph on a silver cloud
When I but see thee.

SUN'S DARLING.

A FEW days after their return home, the weather, always so unsettled in our climate, became suddenly cold, and Aveline's illness immedately assumed a more serious form. Mr. Lindsay looked grave; and to Mrs. Fitzpatrick's repeated entreaties that he would be perfectly open with her respecting her daughter's state; he at length reluctantly owned that he entertained a very slight hope of her ever being restored to health.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick bore the news with more firmness than he had expected. Although her fears had often suggested as much to her own mind, she only half believed it. If Aveline seemed languid or out of spirits; if her cheek was more flushed, or her appetite failed, then Mrs. Fitzpatrick's heart died within her; and she echoed the doctor's unfavourable sentence. But if she rallied for a time, if she turned to her usual occupations for an hour, or if, owing to the return of the fine weather, she enjoyed a temporary respite from her harrassing attacks of cough, then Mrs. Fitzpatrick's spirits and confidence rose again; no one understood she was sure, her daughter's case. Aveline was certain to recover.

It was a mild sunny morning. There had been rain, and it had dispelled the sharp wind so prevalent in our early summer. The sea lay glittering, and breaking into small crested waves. Aveline wrapped in shawls with a heavy cloak laid over her

feet, sat reading upon the beach. Her mother had walked back to the house to give some forgotten order to the servants, and Aveline, as soon as Mrs. Fitzpatrick was out of sight, dropped her book, and clasping her hands on her knee, sat long gazing upon the moving line of water. It had become an exertion to her to read of late. The lines swam before her eyes, if she directed her attention to them for any length of time. Her appetite had declined; her spirits failed her; and her large eyes now filled with tears, as she remained listless, and quiet; gazing vacantly upon the slowly advancing waves.

Two or three merry peasant children were playing on the beach—urging each other closer and closer to the rippling water, and running back with shouts and laughter as the foam broke over their feet. When they came nearer to Aveline, their voices sank; they whispered to each other that it was the sick lady, and stole quietly one by one along the sand. But Aveline caught

sight of them as they were passing, and beckoned them to her side.

"Come to me, Jane," said she "I wish to speak to you, I want to hear how your mother does ?"

"Mother is better, Ma'am, thank you," said the girl. "Mother ate all the chicken broth ;" said a younger child pressing forward.

"I am glad to hear it," said Aveline, "does she sleep better, than she used ?"

"Much better, Ma'am," said the girl, "the doctor says she may leave off taking the stuff at night."

"That is a good sign ; and I hope you are very good children, and do nothing that might vex your mother ; and that you try to help her as much as you can. It is so sad to be ill," said poor Aveline.

"Yes, Ma'am," said all the children together.

"It is such a comfort to her to have good little quiet children about her," said Aveline, in her gentle voice, "and it will be such

a comfort to you to know that you have done all in your power to make her better."

Her earnest manner struck the children; they stood silent, looking stedfastly at her. At last Jane, the eldest, said timidly. "And you, Ma'am, are you getting better?"

"No," said Aveline with a faint smile "no, I do not feel much better yet. I think I must wait until the weather is warmer."

And she drew her shawl closer round her.

"Mother will be sorry for that," said the little girl sadly; "mother said she did not look to see you ever better in this world."

"And mother cried when she said so," added the boy fixing his round blue eyes on Aveline.

Aveline made no answer, when the children had done speaking, and they stood by her side, constrained and silent for some minutes.

"At last she looked up, and said quietly." "Well now, you can go on playing.

Jane will be very careful of her two brothers. It is quite like a woman to be trusted—is it not Jane?"

The children stole gently away hand in hand; and Aveline, after a pause, during which she struggled in vain to calm her feelings, burst into a passion of tears and convulsive sobs. Her mother had so carefully concealed from her all suspicions of her danger; so scrupulously hidden her fears of the result of her illness; that Aveline always looked forward to the warm weather as the infallible cure for her cough, and ascribed to accidental causes the different symptoms which revealed too well to others the nature of her complaint. To die. The thoughts was so new — so terrible. To leave the world—she was so full of genius, of intellectual life, she had done so much, she had so much to do, (the feeling of all those who have done much), and to leave her mother—who had no one—no single thing in life to supply her place. Could it be? Could nothing really save her? Was her

fate so plainly indicated, that the poor peasant woman, whom she visited and relieved, could not fail to read it? Her agitation shook her from head to foot. And yet another thought would intrude itself; a memory and a hope that she had banished, yet clung to in spite of reason, for very long. "If I die," she exclaimed, clasping her hands in agony, "I shall never see him again!"

After a while she collected herself; she would not distress her mother by appearing conscious of her perilous state. And her mother was suppressing all that she feared and felt, from the same kind but mistaken motive; for both would have been relieved and strengthened had they opened their hearts, and wept together instead of in secret.

"Well, Aveline, are you tired," asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as she returned to her daughter.

"Rather tired, mamma, of sitting," said Aveline in that unequal voice that be-

trays recent tears; "if you will give me your arm, I will walk a little way along the beach.

"There is not much sand left," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as they strolled along, "the sea is a sad encroacher, Aveline, and stays for you no more than for King Knute."

But Aveline was weeping silently, and made no reply.

"Aveline, dearest, what is it?" asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick, and her heart trembled within her, for of all things she most dreaded her daughter's suspecting her danger; she knew the rapid inroads of imagination upon a delicate frame.

"Nothing, mamma," said Aveline. "I am low spirited to day, and do not feel strong enough to resist crying—that is all."

"You must not be so much alone," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "have you seen Brand's children?"

"Yes, they have just left me;" said Aveline, "they are nice little creatures, and Jane grows taller I think every day."

"Mrs. Fletcher has sent you a basket of her fine raspberries," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "and a very kind note with them."

"She is very good. I meet every where with great kindness," said Aveline.

"You must take care we do not walk too far," said her mother, "suppose you rest a little."

"I will stand a minute, and watch the sea, mamma," said Aveline.

She leaned on her mother, and remained gazing on the long range of broken rocks against which the waves were tossing their white foam. These rocks, which a little way out at sea, rose some feet above the level of the water, decreased in size as they advanced to the shore, and appeared nothing more than an irregular mass of rough stones, covered with slippery green sea-weed.

Presently a speck appeared on the horizon, and gradually advancing, presented the appearance of some slender vessel.

"Look, Aveline, there is a yacht!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "what a beautiful thing it is!"

"Yes, a pretty toy," returned Aveline listlessly, "but I prefer a fishing boat, I think my sympathies go rather with the poor, than with the rich. What tales of the still magnificence of moonlight nights, what adventures, what perils of winds and storms are connected with the meanest of those little vessels. And the watchful wife, and the sleeping unconscious children, during those rough dark nights, while the father is out toiling for their bread. I do not like the gentry of our day, mamma; all the poetry is on the side of these poor folks."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick smiled, "See," she said, "they have lowered a boat; one of your despised gentlefolks is coming ashore."

Aveline turned her eyes carelessly in the direction of the boat. "I dare say," she replied, "it belongs to the person who has taken the villa on the other side of the cliff. Mark said it had been let the other

day. It would be a very convenient place for any one fond of boating." The boat, at length, neared the shore, and a man in a sailor's costume sitting idly in the stern, threw out a couple of dogs, who swam towards the land.

Aveline, not sufficiently interested in their proceedings to continue watching them, turned slowly away, and loitered along the shore in an opposite direction.

Meantime the dogs had come to land; and one of these, a setter of remarkable beauty after shaking the spray from his coat, ran prying along the shore, until upon reaching Aveline and her mother, he uttered a bark of recognition, and sprang fawning upon them.

"Mamma!" exclaimed Aveline breathless with excitement, "look; it is Farfallo! How well I recollect him. See, he knows me! Don't you remember my naming him at Sorrento? Oh, I cannot be mistaken!"

"Dear Aveline, it is very unlikely," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick."

"No! I am sure—certain of it," cried Aveline, "how could I forget him?"

Her agitation, the glow in her cheeks, the light in her eyes, as she stooped and caressed the dog with a delight that she took no pains to disguise, gave a hope to Mrs. Fitzpatrick that sent a thrill of pleasure through her heart. It was evident that Farfallo's master could not be far off. It was equally evident that Aveline had not forgotten him; all her illness might arise merely from depression of spirits, from that protracted hope, which while it makes sick the heart, seldom altogether spares the body. Doctors did make such extraordinary mistakes in people's complaints. Mr. Lindsay, though a very judicious man, was not infallible; and Mr. Haveloc once more thrown in Aveline's way.

Her fancy was travelling very fast, when a voice, they both well knew, was heard calling Farfallo, coupled with a polite request, not proffered in the gentlest

tones, that "the devil would fetch the dog."

Some rocks were between them and the impatient owner. Farfallo sprang away. Aveline stood up with a bright smile.

"So like him—so impatient!" she said, as if she were paying him a compliment. He came suddenly upon them.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick turned quietly towards him, as if they had only parted yesterday.

"We were to blame, Mr. Haveloc. We kept your dog," said she smiling.

He stopped short in astonishment.

"Mrs. Fitzpatrick! Is it possible?" he exclaimed. "How fortunate I esteem myself in meeting you again."

"The surprise is all on your side," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "This dog of yours warned us of your near neighbourhood."

"You remembered him then? I hope he has not bored you—he is so wet. And you, Miss Fitzpatrick, I trust you are quite recovered."

Aveline made a slight bow, and smiled. Mrs. Fitzpatrick answered for her.

"We have not much to boast of, at present, Mr. Haveloc," said she; "we look to the hot weather to set her up again."

"You must allow me to take you a cruise in my yacht," said Mr. Haveloc pointing to the vessel in the distance. "Sea voyages are said to be very good for invalids; and I am becoming quite an experienced sailor."

"You used to threaten something of that kind at Sorrento," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Yes! but the fancy has gone off as you said it would," he replied. "I shall get rid of my yacht in the autumn, and go abroad again."

"What not tired of travelling yet!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"It is not exactly the love of travelling; but I have promised a friend of mine to go with him to the Pyrenees—a young barrister, who has a few weeks of liberty in the

autumn, and who likes to use it to the utmost."

"What a delightful tour!" said Aveline. "There is nothing equal to mountain scenery."

"But you know, Miss Fitzpatrick, I am not properly sensible of the charms of mountain scenery."

"That is very wrong," said Aveline, looking up to him with a smile. "I was in hopes you might have reformed before now."

"There were three things I remember that I did not justly appreciate," said Mr. Haveloc; "moonlight, monks, and mountains."

"It was only that one old monk that I ever insisted upon," said Adeline.

"I thought him the dirtiest of the whole set," said Mr. Haveloc laughing.

"He was very dirty," observed Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "You cannot think how surprised I was to see you."

"I thought you in Italy," said Mr. Haveloc.

"I thought you still farther," replied Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Indeed! How far?"

"In Egypt. Was not that your plan?"

"I had some thoughts of going across to Venice, and so on to Egypt; but I became anxious to return to England."

"I hope you found your guardian in good health."

"Oh! I hope so," echoed Aveline. "He must be such a delightful old man."

"He is delightful," said Mr. Haveloc warmly. "But I cannot say much for his health; yet these sickly people often outlive stronger ones."

"That is very true," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, with a satisfied air.

As they passed the place where Aveline had been sitting, Mr. Haveloc started forward and picked up a book.

"This is yours, Miss Fitzpatrick," he

said, "do not deny it—now that I am your neighbour, I shall make a point of gleaning after you, and furnish my library with the books you lose."

"You have taken that villa then," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, smiling at Aveline's confusion, for she was rather notorious for losing her things.

"I have. So you have been reading the dark old Florentine, again," said Mr. Haveloc, looking into the book he carried, "I thought, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, you forbade Dante altogether."

"Not quite," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick; "but I was rather an advocate at Sorrento for studies of a lighter description. Aveline's health—"

"Oh, but I am better now, mamma!" exclaimed Aveline.

"You do, indeed, look better, Miss Fitzpatrick, than when I saw you last," said Mr. Haveloc.

"You think so—you really think so!" exclaimed Mrs. Fitzpatrick eagerly, "and

you must be a judge. I, who see her every day, can form no idea of her looks."

"Can there be a doubt of it?" said Mr. Haveloc.

And who, indeed, would have traced the progress of disease in those sparkling eyes —that beautiful bloom. Her walk was no longer stooping; her step was not languid. Her mother was astonished at the renovation that seemed to have taken place within her, though she was enlightened as to the cause. And Aveline, the thought of her danger had vanished like lightning from her mind. She was well, strong, happy, she could never be ill again.

"And how long are we likely to have you for our neighbour, Mr. Haveloc?" asked Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"I have taken the villa for the summer," he said; "but if it pleases me, perhaps, I shall buy it. I should like to have something of a fishing cottage by the sea-side; and though the house is a nut-shell, it is

large enough for that purpose. One puts up with any accommodation at the sea."

"And a single man ought to put up with a cupboard, you know," said Aveline.

"Ah! Miss Fitzpatrick, I am aware of the immense dignity a man gains when he is married," said Mr. Haveloc; "before that awful period, he is hardly looked upon as a member of society. Is this your house? What a paradise. Allow me to return you your Dante, and do me the honour to recollect that I rescued the old bard from the waves."

"No—you must come in, Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I cannot part so quickly from an old friend. We dine early on Aveline's account, and you can take your luncheon at the same time."

"I shall be too happy to come in," said Mr. Haveloc, "for luncheon, I disdain it altogether, as most men do."

"I believe you never eat, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, "you never did. People talk

of ladies living on air; I never could make out what you lived upon at Sorrento."

"Turkies, I believe, Miss Fitzpatrick; they were the staple commodity in that part of the world. I do not wonder that you were anxious to return to England," he said, looking round, as they entered the drawing-room. "The wonder is, how you could ever leave so delightful a spot."

"One would go anywhere in search of health, Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"True, but having found it, as I trust you have," said Mr. Haveloc, turning to Aveline, "you cannot regret the shores of the Mediterranean, here."

"No—I regret nothing, I have not a thing to wish for," said Aveline, as she sat tranquilly on the sofa, absorbed in the content of the present moment. He was with them; he was their near neighbour; they must often see him. Her happiness was only too great to be believed. She never dreamed that his heart was

engrossed by another—she judged him by herself.

For Mr. Haveloc, he was really delighted at the rencontre. He was very partial to Mrs. Fitzpatrick: he respected her character, and admired the cultivation of her mind. They had been used, when they met at Sorrento, to hold long arguments on art and poetry; on society and politics; on every possible topic; in short, both had much knowledge, much originality, much power of expression. And Aveline sat and listened as to an oracle. But with the exception of a few bantering sentences occasionally passing between them, they never spoke to each other. And while he sought and admired the society of Mrs. Fitzpatrick, he only thought of Aveline as an interesting, sickly girl, whom he hoped would gain strength for the sake of her poor mother, who seemed to doat upon her. But although he was not what would be called a good-natured person, yet where his feelings were at all interested, he

displayed an eager and watchful attention, which might easily be supposed to spring from a warmer source than that which actuated his conduct.

Aveline had taken off her bonnet, and her profuse curls of dark hair, of that finest silk that almost bespeaks great delicacy of constitution, hung over her face and shoulders, concealing in some measure the thinness of her outline. Mr. Haveloc was not sufficiently interested in her to mark her quick and unequal breathing; he merely thought as he had said, that she was looking much better than she had done at Sorrento.

"That is your harp, Miss Fitzpatrick," said Mr. Haveloc, as he wandered about the room. "Did you get any lessons from that person at Milan?"

"Mademoiselle S——; yes, a few. But I was obliged to leave off on account of my chest. She did me a great deal of good, however, and brought out my touch very well."

"I hope to hear you one day. Oh! by the way, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, did you ever succeed in finding an engraving of the Cenci that pleased you?"

"No, but I picked up a miniature copy at Rome which almost satisfied me."

"Almost! Ah that inimitable mouth, the colour as well as the form, the faded rose-leaves; but one cannot describe it. A man who had painted such a picture had better die; there would be nothing left for him to do—he could not surpass himself."

"Now I think, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, with something of her old playfulness, "he had better live to be thanked and admired for his good deeds: and having excelled others, he need not be concerned that he can no longer surpass himself."

"And what are you doing, and who have you surpassed in the arts?" said Mr. Haveloc, struck by her reply.

"Something wonderful is in progress," said Aveline laughing, "when I get better, I mean to astonish everybody."

Mr. Haveloc was surprised and pleased with her conversation. Pain, whether mental or bodily, lulls the faculties of some people; but with others, it stings them into unnatural forwardness and activity. So it had been with Aveline. In accomplishment, in language, in general knowledge of every kind, she was singularly forward and perfected. Everything around her proclaimed the elegance of her mind; every trifle bore the stamp of that classic correctness of taste, which she had improved by travel, but which was a part of her natural tendencies.

When he rose to go, it was natural that Mrs. Fitzpatrick should beg him to repeat his visit; that she should assure him of being always a welcome guest.

"Thank you a thousand times," he replied, "you cannot imagine the pleasure I feel at renewing our acquaintance; but I cannot take myself off, until you consent to fix a day for our sailing expedition: do trust yourselves on board with me?"

"Come to-morrow," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I shall see how Aveline is, and we will talk it over then."

"Be very well, Miss Fitzpatrick," said Mr. Haveloc, as he shook hands with her, "as soon as I get you on board, I shall make all sail for Algiers."

This was an allusion to a laughing conversation they had once held at Sorrento, respecting the price they would all fetch, if seized upon by some pirate of the Mediterranean, and carried to the slave market at Algiers. It was clear that he remembered all that had ever passed when they were together. Was it wonderful if she thought that love had prompted his memory ?

There was a silence of some moments after he left the room, and Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who was seated near the window watching Mr. Haveloc as he made his way down to the beach, said :

"What a curious sort of straw hat he wears."

"Does he?" said Aveline, coming near her mother.

"Yes, like the reapers in the 'Tempest.'"

And that was all that passed between them on the subject of Mr. Haveloc's visit.

CHAPTER VI.

Lieben Freunde! Es gab schön're Zeiten
Als die unsern—das ist nicht zu streiten!
Und ein edler Volk hat einst gelebt.
Könnte die Geschichte davon schweigen
Tausend Steine würden redend zeugen
Die man aus dem Schooss der Erde gräbt.
Doch es ist dahin, es ist verschwunden,
Dieses hochbegünstigste Geschlecht;
Wir, wir leben! Unser sind die Stunden,
Und der Lebende hat Recht.

SCHILLER.

"And so you wish you were a pirate, Miss Fitzpatrick," said Mr. Haveloc, as they stood on the deck of his yacht. "I commend your taste. These pirates were pretty fellows in rhyme."

"It would be rather late in the day to

commence Viking, would it not?" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Oh no!" said Mr. Haveloc; "my yacht is quite at Miss Fitzpatrick's service. I do not despair of her making prize of some solitary fishing boat on a dark night. And only think, Miss Fitzpatrick, how excellent the herrings would taste, that you had come by in so meritorious a way."

"I wished to be descended from a pirate," said Aveline, "don't you perceive the amazing difference?"

"Oh, very great! You wish for all their propensities, without the power to put them in practice."

"After all, there were fine things done by those Vikinger," said Aveline. "They had courage."

"Oh, courage! that is born with a man; if he has it not, it is a deformity, not a vice. Just as if he were born without a nose."

"You would respect courage more, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, "if you knew what fear was."

"I never had such a compliment paid me before," said Mr. Haveloc, laughing.

"We have a right to pay you compliments, you know," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who was seated a little apart, with a book in her hand. "But you do not stand up for the water thieves, or land thieves either."

"He pretends to have no enthusiasm," said Aveline, smiling

"On the contrary," said Mr. Haveloc, "I admit that time mellows the proceedings of such gentry; and I own to an enthusiastic desire to see them treated as they deserve."

"I was very glad, Miss Fitzpatrick, when our Calabrian friends were duly sent to the galleys."

"You could not have a prettier name for your yacht, 'the Ariel,'" said Aveline.

"I am sure it is a beautiful craft, though I am no judge of such things."

"The Ariel was christened before I had her," said Mr. Haveloc. "If I meant to keep her, I should take the liberty to change her name."

"And what would you call her?" asked Aveline, with some curiosity.

Mr. Haveloc, hesitated a little, and then said, "the Pearl."

"And I am very fond of pearls," said Aveline. "How many things there are, Mr. Haveloc, the very names of which recalls much that is beautiful in poetry to one's memory. The Pearl, the violet, the lark."

"True enough," said Mr. Haveloc, "a robin is a prettier bird, but he has not been so much be-rhymed. A pistol is a handier weapon than a sword, but it would make a sorry figure in a lyric."

"And a grand pianoforte," said Aveline, laughing, "will never be appreciated with tears and moonlight, like a lute."

"And a rascally pirate will be hung in chains, to the great delight of all sober people, while a horse Viking, or even a Spanish buccaneer, would be exalted in ballad, or blank verse."

"Allow," said Aveline, "that people cannot live *well*, who live only in the present time."

"And that people cannot live wisely, who live in the past or the future," said Mr. Haveloc.

"I do not know whether it is too serious an allusion," said Aveline; "but I cannot help recollecting that 'the children of this world are wiser in their generation, than the children of light.'"

Mr. Haveloc remained silent for some moments. "I wonder what that means exactly," said he, at last.

"It means, I think, to give some little comfort to the upright, when they find that all through their lives they are wronged and surpassed by those who are unscru-

pulous in their tools and weapons," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Cold comfort," said Mr. Haveloc, still musing.

"I think not so," replied Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "I think it is comfort enough if an honest man is told, on the highest authority—it will be so—you will not surpass—you will not be enriched—you will not be well spoken of, like your unprincipled neighbour—you will be deceived and impoverished by those who are more skilful than yourself, skilful in arts which your profession forbids you to use. If they are not told this, they might become restless and dissatisfied, and attribute to themselves some of the failure which belongs to the fact, that this world is the home of the wicked, but a strange land to the Christian pilgrim."

Mr. Haveloc, seemed much struck by her remarks, but remained silent.

"Mr. Lindsay, is an illustration of mamma's idea," said Aveline, "he is much

too honest ever to be rich. Plain dealing never answers with common minds; and I leave you to judge of the proportion of superior people that fall in the way of a country practitioner."

"You think with the old poet," said Mr. Haveloc.

> "The stars are not more distant from the earth,
> Than profit is from honesty!"

"That is very well said," remarked Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "whose is it?"

"Beaumont and Fletcher's," he replied.

"I wish you would read to us 'The Faithful Shepherdess,'" said Aveline, "you were to have done so at Sorrento, only you had not the Author with you."

"Willingly, if you are in the humour for it," said Mr. Haveloc; "but first, Miss Fitzpatrick, I must see you look a little more comfortable; I shall order up a heap of cushions, and install you like 'Lalla Rookh,' before I begin to read."

"Oh! what a Sybarite!" cried Aveline,

as he arranged a pile of red silk cushions for her upon the deck, "do look, mamma!"

"I am much obliged to Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "and feel very little disposed to quarrel with his luxurious equipments, for really Aveline you do begin to look rather fagged."

"I hope he is clever, this country practitioner," said Mr. Haveloc, looking up suddenly from his task.

"Clever!" cried Aveline. "Mamma would be highly offended with any one else who should presume to call her Mr. Lindsay clever. He is a man of excellent judgment, Mr. Haveloc."

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Haveloc, "for your sake."

Aveline smiled and settled herself to listen.

The day was beautiful, the coast in the distance was reduced to a minature picture steeped in the most delicious and variegated tints. The air was hot and still, and nothing

interrupted the silence but the flapping of a sail, and the gentle sound of the water rising and falling slowly against the side of the vessel.

"We make but little way," said Mr. Haveloc.

"That does not matter. It is pleasant to lie at anchor. Suppose we were becalmed in the midst of the Pacific?" said Aveline.

"With one day's luncheon on board," said Mr. Haveloc.

"It is very pleasant to have run into some great danger, after it is all over," said Aveline.

"That makes the pleasure of horrid dreams," said Mr. Haveloc.

"But they are not distinct—real enough," said Aveline. "Every thing seems to happen through a ground-glass."

"One would think you took opium Miss Fitzpatrick," said Mr. Haveloc laughing.

"So she does, regularly," said Mrs. Fitz-

patrick, with an anxious look, and fixing her eyes upon his face.

He looked surprised and pained, opened the book hastily, and began to read.

Aveline was enchanted with 'the Faithful Shepherdess.' Half rising on her cushions, with cheeks flushed, and her large transparent eyes wide open, she feared to lose a single word.

"That is surely the brightest pastoral ever written," said she, as he laid down the book at the close of the first act.

"Do you like it better than 'Comus ?'" he asked.

"I do not like to compare them," said Aveline. "But there seems so much less effort in Beaumont and Fletcher's verse. And what stately simplicity in the opening, —what richness in the lyrical movements ! They seem to have been inspired by the tawney sun-shine of the Greek isles ; while all the woodland scenery seems glittering with the fresh dew of an English summer's night."

"And then Milton's 'Comus' labours under the slight disadvantage of not being written first," said Mr. Haveloc.

"Ah! you mean to insinuate that he borrowed some of the ideas," said Aveline laughing.

"Oh! he never borrowed; his was highway robbery, piracy, Miss Fitzpatrick."

"You do not like Milton, I see," said Aveline.

"No. All his feelings were violently personal. His Theory of Divorce was suggested by his sour discontent of his wife. His democracy by the party he espoused. His religion was the harsh bigotry of his faction, not that which improves the individual. And the much admired anecdote of knocking up his daughters in the night, to write his verses, appears to me the coolest instance of selfish vanity I can now recollect. Fancy, Miss Fitzpatrick, your being rudely aroused from some delicious dream to pen down the leaden stanzas of 'Paradise Regained.'"

"Mamma thinks you are talking treason," said Aveline.

"All the good that I know of him is, that when he had got hold of a wrong principle, he was consistent in holding it," continued Mr. Haveloc. "You know he persisted in rejecting the office that Charles the Second was so generous as to offer him."

"It was generous," said Aveline, "for Milton's poetry had not then received the stamp of time, and Charles was not compelled, by opinion, to be liberal to the author of 'Paradise Lost.'"

They continued conversing upon a variety of topics until it was time to take luncheon; and then Mr. Haveloc would not suffer Aveline to move. He brought up every thing upon the deck that he thought she could fancy, and waited upon her with the utmost care.

He was always morbidly affected by sickness. If he had a servant ill, nothing

could equal his kindness and attention; and, therefore, it was not surprising that he should show so much solicitude to Aveline's comforts.

In the course of the afternoon, she began to feel very chilly. One shawl after another was wrapped round her without effect. Mr. Haveloc was alarmed, but Mrs. Fitzpatrick said it was always so about that time, and that it would pass away. But when it did pass away, Aveline was in such a state of exhaustion that she could scarcely move into the boat, which was lowered to take her to the shore. A fresh breeze had risen; it was rather rough landing. The boat could not be got close enough to the jetty. Mr. Haveloc, after exchanging a few whispered words with Mrs. Fitzpatrick, sprang out, knee-deep in the water, took Aveline in his arms, and carried her not only to land, but across the shingles, and up the rocky path-way to their cottage, and placed her in safety on the sofa in the drawing-room

window, as Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who had been assisted, by the steward, came in at the glass-doors.

Aveline was very much shocked, but what could have been done ? She was unable to walk, and the choice rested between Mr. Haveloc and the steward.

Mr. Haveloc began to make his apologies, but they both laughed before he had concluded them. He was earnest in pressing his further services upon the ladies—he wished to be made of use in fetching their medical man.

Aveline laughed, and assured him that she was no worse than usual. She hardly knew what Mr. Lindsay would say to her if she summoned him for nothing. He was very merciless to imaginary ailments.

He could scarcely conceal the mournful interest she inspired. So attenuated, so brilliant with feverish excitement. But assuming a gay air, he took up his hat, told Mrs. Fitzpatrick he should wait on her the

next morning, to learn whether she had forgiven him for tiring out her daughter, and begged Aveline to put the best face she could upon the matter, lest Mrs. Fitzpatrick should put a stop to all excursions for the future.

CHAPTER VII.

He that would flee from suffering must die,
For life is suffering, and life's cure is death.
The earth, the sea, the radiant orb of day,
The star-bespangled sky, the moon's soft lustre,
These are all beautiful—the rest is fear
And sorrow; and if aught of good may seem
To bless thy lot, count it not happiness.

ÆSOP.

The next morning, as early as he could well hope to be admitted, Mr. Haveloc made his way to Mrs. Fitzpatrick's, carrying with him a cluster of beautiful passion flowers. As he came up to the porch, a gentleman was mounting his horse to ride away, who looked like a medical man, and was, in fact, no other than Mr. Lindsay.

The good doctor cast a keen glance at Mr. Haveloc as he passed him, accompanied by a slight shake of the head, which might be supposed to mean, that if he came there as a suitor, his errand was in vain.

Mr. Haveloc not putting this interpretation upon the gesture, simply feared that Miss Fitzpatrick might be worse, rang the bell, was admitted, and entered.

Aveline was lying on the sofa, drawing upon a small stand placed on the table by her side. She extended her hand over the top of the stand to Mr. Haveloc, and assured him playfully that she had kept her word, and had told Mr. Lindsay no tales of her gay doings yesterday.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick shook hands with him in silence.

He went round to look at Aveline's drawing.

"Beautiful! Miss Fitzpatrick," he exclaimed; "how many strides have you made in art since you crossed the Alps?"

"Do you think so? Not so many,"

said Aveline, laying down her brush. "There is something wrong in the colouring of my sky. But those passion flowers; how splendid! Does your villa produce such treasures as these?"

"Will you come and see?" he said. "I do not know what Mrs. Fitzpatrick will say to my trying to entice you out again; but if you have really recovered your fatigue—"

"Perfectly," said Aveline; "in fact, I enjoyed myself so much that it quite counterbalanced the finale of the expedition."

"What do you say to it, Mrs. Fitzpatrick?" asked Mr. Haveloc, looking through his glass at Aveline's drawing. "A little indigo, I think, would set that sky all to rights."

"Do it for me," said Aveline," offering him a brush.

"It is a serious consideration," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, trying to appear cheerful.

"It will all wash off," said Mr. Haveloc, still going on with the sky.

"I meant the visit to your villa," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Oh! Miss Fitzpatrick, you have no idea what a singular little animal the owner of my fishing cottage has entailed upon me," said Mr. Haveloc. "I really think I shall buy him, and take him away with me. A Norwegian poney, as sagacious as a dog, and covered with long hair, that I can only compare to ragged tufts of grass."

"I want to see it," said Aveline.

She had been so used to have every wish gratified by her mother, that without being at all selfish, she almost took it for granted that every fancy she formed should be immediately fulfilled.

Mr. Haveloc was much amused by her manner.

"You shall see him whenever you please," he said. "Suppose I bring him here to-morrow, and you ride him to the fishing cottage."

"Oh, mamma! that would be nice," said Aveline.

"My predecessor had a great taste for gardening," said Mr. Haveloc. "His little green-house is absolutely hung with air-plants, and he has some water-plants of equal value and scarcity."

"Oh! but we must see the plants, mamma," said Aveline.

"I think not just yet," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick; "Aveline had better take a short ride first to try her powers, for the villa must be two miles off; and I hardly think her equal to the exertion."

"Oh! do send Mark for the poney, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, eagerly. "I will pay poor Mrs. Brand a visit; for it is so long since I have walked down that steep road. Ah! the morning after I came home; that was the last time I was able to take so long a walk."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick remained silent. Mr. Haveloc could see that she was unusually depressed that day about her daughter.

"I will go for him, myself," said Mr. Haveloc. "I think there is a side-saddle in the stable, but I hardly know what I am in possession of—for I have not my horses with me."

"But why not send Mark?" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Because I have nothing on earth to do," said Mr. Haveloc. "I shall see that the poney is cleaned. I shall find the saddle, which I know will not be found if I do not look for it, and bring him here in half the time that a servant would take about it."

"Oh! thank you," said Aveline.

"Mrs. Fitzpatrick looks half unwilling to trust me with you again," said Mr. Haveloc, as he rose.

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "my reluctance is simply to occasion you a walk in the heat, when my servant might so easily save you the trouble."

He came back before they had thought his return possible, and led the poney up

to the drawing-room window for Aveline's inspection.

She was delighted with it. The creature was well proportioned, with a sagacious eye, and a small head, half hidden beneath a forest of mane. His hair grew in abundant tufts, like withered grass, and very much of that colour; so that if horses are subject to the same illusions regarding their personal appearance that usually attend the human race, it is probable he imagined himself of snowy whiteness.

Aveline was anxious to set out directly; but Mrs. Fitzpatrick advised that as the sun was still very powerful, Mr. Haveloc should dine with them, and escort them out afterwards. He readily agreed to this arrangement, and spent the time until their early dinner in wandering about the pretty garden and shrubberies with Mrs. Fitzpatrick; while Aveline, reclining in a low chair by the window, had the pleasure of keeping him continually in sight.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick's dejection increased

when she was away from her daughter. She rarely spoke, and the few words she uttered were in that low, weak voice which is a sufficient indication, to the experienced of mental distress.

Mr. Haveloc opened upon the topic at once.

"I am truly sorry," he said, "to find that Miss Fitzpatrick is so little able to bear fat gue. I hope you really have reason to be perfectly satisfied with your medical adviser."

"Quite," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, turning to him her face as pale as death, "all that is possible has been done."

"Good Heaven! you do not mean—" he exclaimed, "you cannot so entirely—"

Mrs. Fitzpatrick shook her head. He seemed very much shocked; but it was clear to her that his manner was not that of a person who felt a shade of attachment to her daughter, or anything beyond the natural sympathy which the early fate of so interesting a creature must awaken. Know-

ing, as she did, the too certain state of Aveline's health, she could scarcely regret that he was spared the misery of loving her daughter: her only wish was to keep him near her while she lived. In Aveline's weak condition, she was certain that she could not support the pain of being again separated from him; and she came to a resolution, at once dignified and singular. She determined to ask him to continue his visits as long as her daughter was capable of deriving satisfaction from them.

After a painful pause of a few moments, he himself renewed the subject.

"It is so natural you should be nervous; —so reasonable you should see her case in a more desponding light than any one else," he said; "you forget she has youth, repose, all the care that can be lavished upon the most delicate invalid; there are so many things in her favour."

"And do you not think," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "that I have said all this to myself

a thousand times. That I have prayed, struggled, hoped, till hope was vain?"

He looked greatly distressed; in reality much more so for Mrs. Fitzpatrick than for Aveline. He had a strong regard, a sincere friendship for the mother; for the daughter he merely felt the interest which her precarious health had recently awakened.

"But is there nothing," said he eagerly, "a different treatment, a warmer climate. Why not try Madeira? So many have derived benefit—"

"Because, in summer, no climate can surpass our own in this place," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "and Aveline will not live to be tried by another winter."

There was something shocking in her calmness. He looked at her as if not comprehending what she said.

"For all sorrow," she continued, as if answering some thought of her own, "it wears you out, or you wear it out, so there is an end either way; and a great end,

Mr. Haveloc, in the education of the soul. An end, so important, that we ought not to shrink so cowardly from the agony of the means."

"I wish earnestly it was in my power to offer you consolation, or relief," he said, "but this is a case in which words are idle."

"And yet there is one thing, Mr. Haveloc, which, if Aveline's fate were less certain, I could never propose to you. Your society is an amusement to her, and in sickness every enjoyment is so curtailed, that I dread for her the slightest deprivation. Can I ask you to devote some of your time to us while you remain in the neighbourhood; can I even ask that you should prolong your stay beyond what you might have originally intended. If she should linger—"

Her voice failed her.

"Most willingly, my dear Mrs. Fitzpatrick," he exclaimed with eagerness, "sickness admits of few alleviations. I should

be thankful, indeed, if I could afford any comfort to your daughter or yourself."

"You see how desperate I have become," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick with a smile, "to demand of you such a melancholy seclusion. You, whose wealth and position would make you so welcome, so caressed in general society. But all considerations give way to the approach of death."

"Good Heaven! Can you believe such a thought could have a moment's weight with me?" he said hastily, "is life a May game that we should only count the hours devoted to revelry and enjoyment? I esteem myself fortunate that I am able to be with you at a time of so much anxiety and distress."

"I thought this of you. I had every reason to think it," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, pressing the hand he extended to her, "stay, there is Aveline; what could induce her to come out?"

As she stood at the end of the narrow

shaded avenue beckoning to them, the soft fluttering of her white dress, and the shadowy outline of her figure seemed like a dim foreboding of the fate which awaited her. Mr. Haveloc hastened to her side.

"Are you coming to dinner, you two?" said she playfully, "I have no mind to be kept waiting, since I cannot begin my ride until that business is over."

"And could you not have sent a servant to us," he said, "was it needful that you should tire yourself by coming out in the heat? I shall lock up the poney if you commit any imprudences. Take my arm, and keep in the shade."

"You would make me out to be so very ill," said Aveline as she leaned on him. "I do not despair of having a good gallop on the poney yet. Oh! Mr. Haveloc, you have not told me his name. What is it?"

"Hakon Jarl."

"Delightful! Mamma, did you ever hear such a name? From Oehlenschläger's

tragedy. "He shall have some bread from our dinner table."

And Aveline was as good as her word, and fed the poney from the window instead of eating her own dinner.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ma. Then you believe not, Arnold, in the stars?
Ar. Yes, in the stars—when on a winter's night
They stand as thick as drops of dew new frozen
On the dark arch of Heaven—or when they lie
Mirrowed upon the heaving sea—or steal
Slowly and faint into the Summer sky—
But for these ignorant interpreters,
They scarce are worth the scorn of disbelief.

ANON.

AVELINE declared that she would not be defrauded of her ride when the evening came in all its freshness; but Mr. Haveloc said that he saw she was languid; that the morning was the proper time for exercise, and that Hakon Jarl should be his companion the next day, when he paid his respects to Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Ah! you will come to-morrow, that

is well," said Aveline, "but do not let me go quite without a ride this evening; let me take a turn just round the garden."

Mr. Haveloc glanced at Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Yes, let her," she said in a tone of despondency.

The poney was brought to the window; Aveline was lifted on, and Mr. Haveloc taking the reins led him through the shrubberies, and along the broad terrace.

"I wonder if he could go down the steps upon the sands," said Aveline.

"He could, I have no doubt," said Mr. Haveloc, "but you—"

"I should so enjoy it; riding along the sands by moonlight," said Aveline. "Oh! I am quite strong enough—never fear."

Mr. Haveloc led the poney carefully down the steep steps and over the shingles to the sands, now stretching far and dry, the tide being at its lowest.

"How glad I am that we live by the sea," said Aveline.

"It is delightful for a part of the year," said Mr. Haveloc. "I should not care about it in winter."

"But it is in winter," said Aveline, "that the waves are so rough; you should see them running against that headland on a stormy night; when you catch a glimpse of the foam tossed high against the very peak of the rock there, just when the wind has torn the clouds asunder, and let out a glimpse of the moon for an instant. I would not miss the sea in winter time. And then the hoarse sound of the waves on the shingles grows louder when mixed up with the boisterous north wind. And the surge boils and swells, and then the white froth parts and shows the dark angry water beneath. No! trees and fields are barren in winter; but there is always life in the sea!"

"And this creature is all this while slowly and invisibly borne onwards to the grave," he thought, "so full of the best part of life—the intellectual!"

"You are thinking!" said Aveline.

"And so were you; only you thought aloud," he answered,

"Ah! look Mr. Haveloc, they are launching a boat; let us go a few steps farther and see them. Don't you like the rough noise, and the splash, and the voices of the fishermen together. See, just in the moon's path; and now they are in shadow again. When I was a child I used to envy the fishermen as I saw them starting on a bright evening like this, for their merry night's fishing."

"And they envied you, perhaps, that you were going to enjoy a good night's rest, instead of getting wet and weary, and not knowing whether they should catch fish enough to buy their next day's breakfast."

"Perhaps so," said Aveline. "Few people would envy me now."

"Because you are in bad health."

"Yes. Do you not think mamma is very much depressed to day?"

"She struck me as being so."

"Mr. Lindsay tells her the truth," said Aveline, "it is a comfort to me to be sure of that; as he would tell me the truth if I were to ask him."

"That is a comfort," said Mr. Haveloc, "at least, whatever were to befal me, I would rather know it."

"Did you ever have your fortune told, Mr. Haveloc?"

"No, never. Oh, yes, I forgot! I had my fortune told me once near Rome; in the Campagna."

"By a gipsy?"

"A regular gipsy, with a face like the head of Memnon in the Museum; long eyed, with massive features, and the upper and under lip of equal thickness."

"What did she tell you? Do try and recollect."

"Let me consider," said Mr. Haveloc, leaning against the pony's neck, "first she asked me for a crown."

"Of course you gave it; but such a sum

ought to have bought you a very handsome fortune."

"So the Sybil seemed to think, for she told me I was greatly beloved by a young lady with dark eyes."

Aveline trembled.

"You are cold; we will finish the fortune teller in the house."

"No, no—go on here."

"Let me lead him back to the garden, you forget I am responsible to Mrs. Fitzpatrick for your well-being. I will go on; though I did not know you were superstitious."

"Yes, I am, about gipsies."

"Well, I ventured to hint that these pleasing events always told better when there was a strong contrast between the parties; and that I should be obliged to the Sybil to furnish my young lady with blue eyes before she proceeded any farther. But my Zingara was not so accommodating, 'she did not like,' she said, 'to trifle with the stars; the dark eyed lady insisted on being attached to me. But, she would work me an incredible deal of woe.'"

"Ah!" cried Aveline raising her voice almost to a shriek, "what did she say. Tell me how—what came next?"

"I'll tell you what, Miss Fitzpatrick," said he leading the pony up the stony staircase, "when I was a great many years younger, I have sat up telling ghost stories at Christmas, until I was afraid to look behind me; but I never heard that this sport was good for an invalid. You are as much afraid of gipsies as I was of ghosts. We will talk of something else."

"No, but finish I entreat you," said Aveline in a gentle tone.

"Why the Sybil told me that I should survive this injury, whatever it was; but she declined being more explicit. She also said that I should be very happy by and bye, perhaps she meant in Heaven. I hope so. But I gave her another crown and wished her good day."

"Ah!" said Aveline, "my gipsy was more explicit."

"Where did you pick up yours?"

"Here, on the sea-shore."

"And what news did she give you for your money?"

"She told me—shall I repeat it?"

"Yes, do; that I may laugh you out of it?"

"She told me I should break the heart of the person I loved best; and that I should die young."

"She was an idiot!" said Mr. Haveloc.

"Ah! my mother. Shall I not break her heart," said Aveline, with a sudden burst of tears.

"Never; you are in ill-health, and attach a meaning to words you would laugh at, if you were stronger. I do believe the worst suffering in illness is the dejection it causes. You should not allow yourself to be so weighed down."

"But if I die—"

"But do not think so. The woman saw you looked delicate, and thought she could turn her warning to a good account. I wish I—"

Aveline seized his hand. A gipsy woman was advancing towards them from the other end of the terrace. He was at a loss what to do; he feared to leave Aveline for a single moment, lest she should faint; and still more he feared to let the woman come within speaking distance.

"Have no fears for me. She can say nothing that I do not know," said Aveline.

"Will you have your fortune told, my pretty lady and gentleman," said the woman advancing with the insinuating gestures of her tribe.

"No, there's money for you," said Mr. Haveloc, throwing the woman his purse heavy with gold, "there is more than you could earn. Go now, quickly, the lady is ill."

"Would she like," said the gipsy.

"No, I tell you. Go at once. You have no business here!"

The gipsy made a sign in the air with her hand which filled him with horror; it seemed to him as if she traced the outline

of a coffin:—then laughed, turned, and vanished.

"It is the same," said Aveline, trembling.

"It is the gipsy of the Campagna," he said at the same moment.

"What do you think of it?" said Aveline as he helped her to dismount, and supported her to the sofa. "Is it not as if she came to watch the fulfilment of her prediction?"

"On the contrary. She came knowing it was easier to frighten than to beg money out of people," said he taking a chair beside her. "But your man ought to keep better watch."

"It is not his fault. Remember the terrace is open at one end; but the cliff is so rugged that we always consider it safe. Here comes mamma—let us tell her of it."

Aveline seemed more cheerful again. The supper-table was drawn to the sofa. She related the appearance of the gipsy in a

laughing manner, and tried to make it appear that Mr. Haveloc had been very much frightened.

"Confess," said Aveline, "that she put you into bodily fear."

"I own it," he replied. "You will never say again of me that I do not know what fear is."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick gave him a grateful smile. She could easily understand on whose account he had been alarmed.

"I am afraid you were by no means *quitte pour le peur*," said Aveline helping herself to salad. "Only think, mamma, of his throwing the wretch his purse. So extravagant."

"Very wrong, indeed," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"But when one gets frightened," said he, laughing, "what is to be done? When my servant asks me what has become of my purse, I must say I was stopped by a footpad."

"Will your servant call you to account?"

asked Aveline, opening wide her large eyes at the idea of any one taking Mr. Haveloc to task.

"I should not wonder. He is a very old servant, and says and does pretty much what he pleases."

"How I should like to hear you go on together," said Aveline with a smile.

"Oh! it seldom amounts to a duet. He generally unburdens his mind at night; and when I am tired of saying yes, and no, I fall asleep, and so escape the end of the lecture."

"I should like to know, if it was not indiscreet, what the lectures were about?"

"Generally financial. If he thinks I have paid more for a horse than it is worth, it is a long time before he gets over it. He was very much shocked when I bought that plague of a yacht; and at Rome he was a perpetual torment. I could hardly look at a picture, or a cameo, without his

hinting that I should end my career in the Queen's Bench."

"But that shows a great deal of attachment," said Aveline; "one sees too little of that feeling in these days. But we are very fortunate. Mrs. Grant was a treasure."

"Shall I come to-morrow, Mrs. Fitzpatrick?" said Mr. Haveloc rising. "Miss Fitzpatrick meets with nothing but misfortunes when I have the charge of her."

"Oh, come!" said Aveline, "by all means; and leave the pony here. Mark said he could accommodate him, and it will be something for me to pet. I shall feed myself to-morrow."

"There Aveline, you must not sit up any longer," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"I am all obedience," said Aveline rising. "Good night, Mr. Haveloc, I hope you will not meet our gipsy on your way home."

CHAPTER IX.

Our joys are kin to griefs—in time shall cease
The term of soundest health : disease
Dwells in our house, and opes to death a door.
Oft amid favouring gales and summer skies
Destruction's breakers madly rise
And wreck our hopes upon the rocky shore.

AGAMEMNON.

If Mr. Haveloc had not been entirely engrossed by his affection for Margaret, it would have been almost impossible to have been thrown so much in the society of Aveline, and under circumstances of such touching interest, without becoming warmly attached to her.

Her understanding was more matured, her fancy brighter, her acquirements larger than those of Margaret. She had not been

to a boarding-school; and she had gained from her mother's thoughtful mind, more education than from all her masters. She was less beautiful than Margaret—less graceful, but more elegant; there was more of style about her appearance, and less of simplicity. Therefore she looked older than she was, and Margaret younger. And in the details of domestic life, she was perhaps more formed than Margaret, to interest the fancy and excite the attention.

She was accustomed to make all those little demands upon the sympathy and assistance of those around her, which you see so constantly in French women, and which are generally attractive to men in this country, perhaps from their contrast to the more quiet and independant habits of English women in general.

If she wished to give little Jane a bonnet and cloak, Mr. Haveloc and her mamma were summoned to the table, and were obliged to look over the patterns the servant

had brought from the neighbouring town, and discuss the colour and fashion of the garments. And Mr. Haveloc was desired to walk down to Brand's cottage, and look at the child to see whether red or blue would suit her best; and to inquire after Mrs. Brand's health, and to ask the best of the two Toms, whether he had yet been able to find that specimen of sea-weed that Miss Fitzpatrick wanted to complete her orders of Cryptogamia."

Those persons who spend their lives in wandering from place to place, little know how much of interest they forfeit in not having a settled place of abode. So many little elegant trifles accumulate in a home that can never be packed up and carried from one hired residence to another. Mrs. Fitzpatrick's was just the sort of house where one might lounge away the morning delightfully. Chairs and sofas of all patterns were scattered about the room; drawn to the carved tables, or placed temptingly near the large, open window, from which

you could step at once into the garden, where the finest flowers filled the air with their perfume, and seemed to overrun the wire baskets in which they were planted. The tables were strewn with books and prints; with cameos, carvings and choice miniatures. Aveline's painting was generally on a reading stand near the sofa, and a little lava tray of modelling tools stood on a slab at the farthest end of the room, covered by a cambric handkerchief with a foreign border of brilliant colours.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was generally to be found seated near the sofa, working at a large frame of embroidery, an employment at once picturesque and dignified for persons of middle age, but which in young people seems to be the resource of an indolent mind. Aveline had as yet but few of the habits of an invalid. She was very careful of her costume, which was generally a richly worked muslin made in a foreign fashion; with a large Cachemere lying somewhere about the room, which wrapped

her from head to foot when she became chilly. And though it was out of her power to occupy herself for more than a few minutes at a time, yet it was surprising how little of languor pervaded her manner and conversation. She had always a book by her side to glance into when she was at ease, and when her restless fits came over her, she would wander about the room arranging the flowers, or tuning her harp, or turning over the beautiful articles of virtù, with which the room was decorated. And when wrapped in her bright coloured Cachemere she reclined in an easy chair with her silver *bonbonnière* in her fingers which she handled as an old courtier might have done a snuff-box, a stranger could not easily have been made to believe that but a few weeks of life remained to her.

It was singular that Mr. Haveloc never suspected her affection for him. She who seemed to receive new life from his presence; who was entirely and exclusively

occupied with him—who hardly removed her eyes from him when he came, and who spent her time in expecting him when he was away. He treated it all as a sick person's fancy, and submitted far more implicitly to her demands, than if he had been seeking to ingratiate himself in her heart.

Serious illness generally weakens the mind; and in the case of Aveline, it somewhat dimmed her perceptions. She did not attach the exact meaning to Mr. Haveloc's constant visits, that she could not fail to have done in health. She had mourned his absence, she was contented in his society, and it seemed as if she felt no desire to penetrate the future, or to anticipate a time when they must part.

"He is late, mamma," said Aveline one day. "He is certainly later this morning; something has happened. That yacht—you know it was very windy last night."

"My dear child, I can see the yacht from the window; and I do not think he has

been on board of her since we went with him. Besides, we must not be so unreasonable as to look for him always at one hour."

Aveline took up her book again. Presently Mr. Haveloc made his appearance at the drawing-room window with a large flower in his hand; a splendid cup shaped blossom, with white leaves tinged with pink, that shed a delightful perfume all over the room.

"Look, Miss Fitzpatrick," he said coming up to Aveline, "I have waited for some purpose; my water-lilly has flowered this morning. Did you ever see anything so beautiful?"

"And you have brought it me," said Aveline taking the flower, "how good you are. I will put it in water directly. It shall have the Dresden jar all to itself; that with the holly berries."

Mr. Haveloc brought the jar and rang for water.

"And is this a water-lilly?" said she, still admiring the flower.

"Of that species; it came from South America, and is I believe, the only one in England. I had hoped it was a lotus just to put one in mind of Moore's poetry. And how are you to-day?"

"To-day? Charming. I could do all sorts of things. Walk down to the beach, or up to the village; or play a fantasia on the harp." As she spoke, a string flew. "Hark;" she said, "I have lost a harp-string; a small one I think by the sound. Just look and tell me the extent of the damage, Mr. Haveloc."

"One of the very smallest. Look—up at the top here."

"I must get up and mend it," said Aveline. "The harp-strings are in that drawer, Mr. Haveloc; may I trouble you?"

She rose languidly, and moved to the harp; resting her hand on the table as she went: selected one of the strings Mr. Haveloc brought her, and began to undo the broken one. But, in spite of her boast, it

was not one of her good days. She wavered, and caught the harp for support.

"Why will you not rest;" he said, drawing a chair close to her. "I can put on your string—give me the key."

Aveline sank into the chair and resigned her task to him.

"But who taught you to put on harp-strings?" said she, with a searching look.

"I learned it years ago of a harp player, who was teaching the sister of a friend of mine. He said I should one day find it a useful accomplishment. Do you not agree with him?"

"Perfectly!" said Aveline, looking up to him with a smile.

"And which does this string rhyme to?" he asked, when he had put it on.

"Ah! you are right," said Aveline, "the octaves are the rhymes of music. Look, this is the octave."

"Now, will you go back to the sofa?" he asked.

Aveline shook her head. "I am comfort-

able here," she said. "I don't mean to move till I grow restless. Will you have the goodness to bring me that tray? I want to look over my tools."

She threw off the handkerchief, and sat playing with her tools and turning them over like a child.

Mr. Haveloc drew a low chair close to hers and began to examine them also.

"Ah!" said Aveline, looking up, "I was just going to advise you to address yourself to sculpture. It is the finest of all the arts."

"Do you place it above poetry?" he asked.

"Sculpture is poetry," said Aveline eagerly, "only it is a universal language. It is the highest art. It is profaned as every thing in these days is profaned, by the language of ridicule and burlesque. But everything in sculpture that is not addressed to the most ideal feelings, becomes disagreeable. The ideal is the atmosphere of sculpture. It does not admit

of caricature. Think of Danton's villanous statuettes," and Aveline looked all disgust.

" Ah!" said Mr. Haveloc, " there is one of Litzt, on the drawing-room mantelpiece in my villa—a wonderful likeness."

" And you have not broken it to pieces ?" claimed Aveline.

" That would not be in accordance with the Ideal," said Mr. Haveloc. " Justice is a cardinal virtue, and I presume a subject worthy of the chisel; and M. Litzt does not belong to me."

" Don't laugh," said Aveline.

" I did not know," said Mr. Haveloc, " that you were such an enemy to the comic muse. I am sure you must enjoy wit."

" Yes. But the spirit of wit is the very essence of prose, in direct opposition to poetry, which takes all things in a serious light. And in these days everything is mocked and parodied until people are laughed out of the little love they have left for what is noble and beautiful."

"And then there will be a great re-

action," said Mr. Haveloc. "We shall all become as sober as judges a few years hence."

"I hope at least," said Aveline "that we shall learn to laugh in the right place, and that will be, not at great, but at little sentiments and actions."

"Do you know, Miss Fitzpatrick, you will think me guilty of treason after your exordium on sculpture. But you talk of the chisel, and your instruments remind me of nothing so much as the apparatus of a dentist."

"Oh, mamma, do scold him!" cried Aveline. "It is atrocious—a dentist too! A race of people of whom I have as much horror as the Egyptians had of their embalmers?"

"Well, really," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, looking up from her work. "All those mysterious slender little instruments, Aveline?"

"It is a calumny!" cried Aveline, gathering up her tools.

"Do not be angry, Miss Fitzpatrick," said Mr. Haveloc. "I will tell you what I do admire. This handkerchief; the border is superb. You got it abroad. I always know people who have travelled, by their coloured handkerchiefs—they are sure to pick them up at Paris."

"Oh! they are common enough in England, now," said Aveline. "But that is a good border, the pattern is Arabesque. You wear them, don't you? Let me look at yours."

Mr. Haveloc produced his handkerchief with a violet edge.

"How dare you!" said Aveline playfully, "It is much finer than mine. What a coxcomb."

"Change then," said Mr. Haveloc.

Aveline seized his handkerchief with all the eagerness of a child, and threw him hers.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick looked with rather a grave smile at Aveline; but she laughed and squeezed it behind the cushion at the

back of her chair, as if to make sure of her new possession.

"You will repent your bargain, but you shall not have it back," said Aveline.

"Not at all," said he. "I have got the handsome border, and for the fineness I know nothing about it."

"It is just dinner time," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I hope, my dear Aveline, you are ready for it."

"Quite hungry, mamma. Will you run and fetch Hakon Jarl, Mr. Haveloc? I hear Mark coming with his plate of bread."

Mr. Haveloc went off directly, he never hesitated an instant at any of her commands.

As soon as he was gone, she drew out the handkerchief and gazed at it with intense delight.

"Ah!" she said to herself, "I have at last got something of his—I will not again destroy it."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick looked at her with a sigh, but said nothing.

"There is no need now, is there, mamma? When I thought I should never see him again, it was unwise to keep anything to put me in mind of him;" said Aveline, folding and unfolding the handkerchief, and quite engrossed by her own thoughts. "But now that we see him every day—"

"Certainly—it is quite different," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, speaking with effort.

"You feel uncertain about my health," said Aveline, not noticing the anguish her words caused her mother, "but you know it may improve."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick, unable to control her voice, rose and hurried out of the room. This was a most unusual instance of emotion with her, and had Aveline been in health, such a circumstance would have agitated her beyond measure.

"Poor mamma," said she, looking after her mother, "I do believe she worries herself sadly about my health, and no wonder; for at times, I almost despair of myself. I am better now, however."

Mr. Haveloc led the pony up to the window, and Aveline fed him with one slice of bread after another.

"Do you think he knows me, Mr. Haveloc?" she asked.

"He ought," said Mr. Haveloc, "but take care, Miss Fitzpatrick, he will include your fingers in his bill of fare some fine day."

"I am sure he would not do it on purpose," said Aveline.

"Ah! here is Mr. Lindsay. I am really glad to see you this morning; mamma is very low about me. Go and cheer her—tell her I am better."

"No—but are you?" asked Mr. Lindsay.

"What has that to do with it? I don't want you to blind me, Mr. Lindsay, but mamma. But seriously, I am no worse than when you last saw me."

"So I find; you are much the same," said Mr. Lindsay, removing his fingers from her pulse.

"And it is more important that you

should give me a good word," said Aveline, "because I meditate doing something very imprudent to morrow."

"Ay—what is that?" said Mr. Lindsay.

"Going to church, doctor," replied Aveline.

"You could not do better," said the doctor drily. It will be a glorious hot day; and the little walk up that steep hill will just put you into condition for sitting two hours on an uneasy straight bench;—go by all means."

"I thought you would be perverse, doctor," said Aveline. "I expected it. And let me tell you, in the first place, I am not going to walk. I mean to ride Hakon Jarl. Take him back, Mr. Haveloc, I have no more bread to give him."

"And why, in the name of all that's good, cannot you stop and say your prayers at home?" asked the doctor.

"Because I don't choose it, doctor. I like to go to church."

"Ah! a good many people think there is something mysterious in the air of a church," said Mr. Lindsay. "However take your own course; there is something truly pious in a bad cold caught in a damp pew —it sends people now and then to Heaven before their time, I grant you."

"Ah, doctor, if people did not know you, they would not think you so good as you are. Now mind what you are about to mamma."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was now quite composed, even cheerful. She shook hands with Mr. Lindsay; "begged him to take some luncheon at their early dinner," and summoned Mr. Haveloc from the garden.

"Aveline is your charge you know," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I do not even venture to carve for her."

"What shall it be, Miss Fitzpatrick?" said Mr. Haveloc, drawing his chair to the table.

"Sweetbread, I think," said Aveline, looking round, "and mushrooms."

"No mushrooms;" said Mr. Lindsay.

"I will!" said Aveline.

Mr. Haveloc put them on her plate.

"What do you always shake your head for, doctor, when you look at him?" asked Aveline, laughing; "has he so much the appearance of a bad subject?"

"I shook my head at the mushrooms," said Mr. Lindsay.

"You see, doctor, her spirits are very good," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, in a low voice.

"I see," he replied, with a nod. But it was evident he saw no comfort in it.

. . . . .

Every one knows the stillness that seems to settle over town and country on the Sunday in England. Even in the most retired spot, everything is more silent and quiet than before. No sound of waggons in the neighbouring lanes; no rural noise of labourers going forth to their daily toil. And when the scenery chances to be beautiful, the day warm

and fine, and this delicious quiet diffused around, only broken by the distant and uncertain sound of the church bells; there are few persons who would be tempted to exchange this refreshing pause from labour; this purifying rest to the mind, for the gaudy revelry of a continental Sabbath day.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick pointed out this stillness to Mr. Haveloc, when he met her in front of her cottage the next morning.

"It always brings to my mind those words of the Psalmist," she said, "'Be still, and know that I am God!' As if this complete and solemn repose were necessary to the mind, before contemplating the majesty of the Divine nature."

"Does Miss Fitzpatrick still hold to her intention," he asked.

"She does; unless you can persuade her out of it."

"I feel very uneasy at the idea of her going. I saw plainly that Mr. Lindsay did t like it."

no

"Good morning, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline. She was standing at the open window, ready for church. Her white dress and splendid shawl, fastened by two large gold pins, gave something of amplitude to her figure; but her face looked more wasted in her bonnet, and the bright colour on her cheeks seemed to assort but ill with their shrunken outline. She seemed more than usually grave and quiet; not exactly in low spirits, but a kind of settled melancholy; she sat down, and gave her hand to Mr. Haveloc; then occupied herself quietly in putting on her gloves. They were a new pair of her usual size, but now much too large. She fastened them, and looked at them for a minute without speaking.

"Are you sure you are quite equal to going, my dearest?" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, struck and chilled by Aveline's manner.

"Quite, mamma," said she, steadily.

"You will not be prudent, and let me read prayers to you at home?" said Mr. Haveloc, who was leaning over her chair.

"Not to day; but if I live, Mr. Haveloc, I shall call upon you another Sunday in that capacity," returned Aveline, in a low voice.

"The poney is ready," he said, taking up her prayer-book.

"You think me very wilful, I am afraid," said she, as he arranged her cloak, around her.

"Sick people have a right, you know, to be wilful," he replied.

Aveline sighed; and spoke no more during the ride. Mr. Haveloc led the poney, and Mrs. Fitzpatrick walked by her daughter's side.

At the gate of the church-yard she dismounted, and Mark, who had followed at a distance, led the poney away to the Vicarage till the service was over.

Aveline bore the fatigue remarkably well. She remained seated and abstracted, repeating solemnly the responses with the people. Sometimes she seemed to shiver, as if something awful occurred to her mind.

But at the Belief, she rose up suddenly, and remained standing with her face turned to the altar, repeating the words after the clergyman in a distinct voice. And it seemed to be quite involuntary on her part, for she sat down again with the same abstracted air, and remained during the service apparently unconscious, or forgetful of the presence of any one.

"I thought I got through it very well," said Aveline, as she was going home.

"Much better, my love, than I expected," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Don't hurry the pony, Mr. Haveloc; this road is so beautiful. I am not at all impatient to get home," said Aveline.

It was a narrow, steep lane, with high banks, partly composed of broad ledges of rock, with all their fine variety of colours, showing through fern and creepers, and stunted bushes of oak and maple.

Mr. Haveloc led the poney as slowly as he liked to go, stopping from time to time to gather wild flowers for Aveline.

All at once the sun went in; the air became chilly—then the wind rose. Dark masses of ragged vapour came hurrying over the landscape, floating and drifting over the hills; now parting like a curtain, now collecting and settling in a dense mass that almost concealed the outline of the country.

"It is the sea-fog. It is coming towards us!" cried Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "What are we to do with Aveline?"

She looked really bewildered.

"Oh, my dear mamma, don't mind me," said Aveline; "Mrs. Grant's cottage is at the end of the lane; I will go in there till the fog is past."

"Let us make haste then, Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, mending her pace; "the fog travels fast. She will be wet. What will become of us?"

"Can you go faster?" asked Mr. Havelock, who was urging the pony as fast as he could walk.

"No; my head swims," said Aveline.

She could not bear anything like agitation or hurry.

Mrs. Grant, who had just arrived from church by a path across the fields, was all astonishment when she saw the party coming briskly towards the cottage door. She stepped out of the little garden gate to meet them.

"Why, Miss Aveline, my dear young lady, what brings you out so far from home?" she asked.

Aveline was too flurried to speak.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick began her explanations, but they were interrupted in the midst, for Aveline, after a vain attempt to get off the poney, sank into Mr. Haveloc's arms, and fainted away.

Mrs. Grant was terribly frightened. She thought at first that Aveline was dead. Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as usual, calm and prompt.

"Don't go away," were her first words when she recovered, turning her eyes in search of Mr. Haveloc.

"Tell me when you are quite restored, that I may have the pleasure of scolding you," he said, coming up to her chair. "I do not know what business you have to frighten us in this way."

"I will tell you what, dear Mrs. Grant," said Aveline, "we will send for our dinner to add to yours, and we will all dine together. It will be something like a pic-nic."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick agreed. Aveline could not move at present, and she must not be kept waiting for her dinner.

Mr. Haveloc offered to walk home, and give what orders Mrs. Fitzpatrick pleased.

"And be sure to come back and dine with us," said Aveline, eagerly.

"Have a little mercy on him, Aveline," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, smiling; "he may not be quite so fond of pic-nics as you are."

But Aveline insisted; and Mr. Haveloc readily promised that he would come back to dine.

"Is not it nice, Mr. Haveloc?" said

Aveline, when they were all seated round the little table in Mrs. Grant's kitchen. Aveline being in the old lady's easy chair, supported with pillows.

If anybody had told Mr. Haveloc at any period of his life, that he would be dining in a cottage with an old nurse, he would have thought he might safely deny the charge; but as he was there, he quite won Mrs. Grant's heart by his politeness to her; and so overcame her by his care for Aveline, that although not much given to hyperbole, she frankly owned that she thought him an angel, the first moment she was alone with Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

The sea-fog passed off, and the afternoon was brilliant.

Mark led home the pony, and bespoke a carriage from the inn, to take Aveline home after tea.

She laid down on the nurse's bed till tea-time; and then rose refreshed and better.

The nurse remained with her, and, at her

particular desire, Mr. Haveloc and her mamma went to church a second time.

"And, my darling, whatever you do, don't go to church again until Mr. Lindsay gives you leave," said Mrs. Grant, as she helped Aveline into the carriage.

"Ah, Mrs. Grant!" said Aveline, "if I had not felt that this would be the last time, do you think I should have been so earnest to go?"

CHAPTER X.

Ant. Thee will I love, and with thee lead my life;
Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife;
Give me thy hand.

COMEDY OF ERRORS.

There was, perhaps, nothing on earth for which Elizabeth Gage would have felt more unmixed contempt, than for an unrequited attachment;—no fate under Heaven from which she would have considered herself more utterly exempt; and yet, to her dismay, she began to suspect that she felt too warm an interest for her father's guest. The fact was, that she had felt this interest and admiration so very long before they met, that it was not now a very easy task to undo these feelings. She merely copied strictly the silence and reserve that distin-

guished his manner; talked no more than politeness demanded; and at once wished and dreaded the termination of his visit.

He suited Captain Gage admirably, though no two characters could be more opposite. He was less like a sailor than a courtier of Elizabeth's reign. His gravity, his classical tastes, his habits of study, his proficiency in the dead languages, together with that cast of countenance seldom seen but in the age to which it belongs, seemed to stamp him as the companion of Raleigh and Southampton. But he still retained a plainness of speech and directness of purpose that is supposed to be generally indicative of the profession to which he belonged.

He had regained his health in great measure. He did as other people; he joined Elizabeth and her father in their rides and walks; he knew all Captain Gage's tenants; he had been with Elizabeth to the almshouses; he even carried her basket for her, but always in silence. He had observed

her at the head of her father's table, in their large dinner parties; he had gone out with them in return; he had watched the four or five young gentlemen who were pretending timidly to Miss Gage's favour, and the two middle aged men who alternately made her an offer once a quarter.

One sunny morning in August, Elizabeth came into the breakfast-room, where her father was standing by the open glass doors, and having embraced him and taken her place before the urn, she saw Sir Philip at a little distance on the lawn, talking to one of the gardeners.

"My dear father," said she, "have the charity to tell him breakfast is ready, for I am no Beatrice that I should summon him to table."

Captain Gage laughed and made a sign to his friend.

"Have you much of a garden at Sherleigh?" he asked, when they were seated at the table.

"I dare say not," replied Sir Philip,

"I have not been there for years, and people seldom attend much to a garden unless there is a lady to overlook them."

"Bessy never does anything to my flowers, except gather them," said Captain Gage.

"What!" said Elizabeth, laughing, "did you find out that I took the red passion-flower yesterday?"

"Yes, I saw it," said her father, "will you write those letters for me after breakfast?"

Elizabeth always wrote her father's business letters. She seated herself at a table and selected pens and paper.

"Papa! I must complain of you," she said, "you take my best envelopes for everybody. Suppose I were to want to send out invitations; I should have nothing but coarse paper left."

"Which? The envelopes with the crest? Oh! I will be careful in future; you are very stingy of your best paper."

"Well, I am to write to Palmer about

the meadows, and to Brown about the lease. Anything else?"

"Why I don't know what to do about the bees; if you could send a line to Harding—"

"My dear father, we are fated never to keep bees, but if you have any fancy for the hives—"

"You are a saucy girl; have you written to Palmer?"

"Yes, there it is."

"Excellent. Oh! what does George mean to do about his brown horse?"

"Calypso? He left him here for me to ride during the summer."

"You—ride Calypso—my good child, you will break your neck."

"If you are going to the farm to-day, my dear father, I will prove to you that Calypso can be ridden without such a catastrophe."

"Look here," said her father, taking a letter from a servant, "here are cards for Mrs. Hollingsworth's ball."

This was a lady of large fortune in the neighbourhood, whose eldest son was a very persevering admirer of Miss Gage's.

Sir Philip was reading the paper in the window.

"My dear father, I will not go," said Elizabeth in a low but decided tone.

"Why, Bessy, how is that?" said her father, looking much amused, "Mrs. Hollingsworth's balls are excellent, and there is Charles Hollingsworth for your partner."

"My dear father, I will not subject myself to the annoyance of being in his company," said Elizabeth in the same low tone, "I consider myself very much aggrieved by that person."

"Why, my dear, he would make you an offer to-morrow, if you would give him any hope."

"But do you not see," said Elizabeth, "that he owes it to me to give me the power to put a stop to his attentions, if they are unpleasing to me. There is something of cowardice in subjecting one, without

ceasing, to civilities which must end in nothing, but which, in the meantime, cause a great deal of gossip, and which a woman has no power to arrest except by a refusal. I consider myself," said she, half laughing, "very unjustly treated by Mr. Hollingsworth."

"And Mrs. Hollingsworth has the match so much at heart," said Captain Gage, taking up the note which accompanied the cards; "here you see she begs us to dine and dress at her house. Offers beds: but you are made of flint."

"She does not offer to send Mr. Charles out of the way," said Elizabeth, "do not go, my dear father, for my sake."

"And here is a card for Sir Philip," continued Captain Gage, "what say you d'Eyncourt, have you any fancy to go to this ball?"

"If Miss Gage had intended to go," said Sir Philip, looking up from the paper with his usual gravity, "I should have liked to see her dance; but as she declines

I shall be obliged to you to include me in your refusal."

"No one has seen me dance within the memory of man, Sir Philip," said Elizabeth, smiling, "I walk through one quadrille always for form's sake."

"Well then, Bessy, write a civil refusal, full of regrets," said Captain Gage, laying the note before her, "I must go and speak to Meadows about the carriage horses."

She took up a pen. Sir Philip drew his chair nearer to hers.

"How shall you decline?" he asked.

Elizabeth thought him rather curious, but as he was partly interested in the matter, she replied at once:

"I shall be able to tell her fortunately, that we are expecting some friends to stay with us the week after next."

"And if she should invite the friends?"

"Nay, that would be very malicious," said Elizabeth, laughing.

"But supposing such a case," said Sir Philip.

"Still fortune favours me," said Elizabeth, "for the friends we expect are an elderly couple, who certainly would not go to a ball."

"If the lady has a great interest in your coming, I think she would hardly give you up so easily," remarked Sir Philip.

"Ah! Sir Philip," said Elizabeth turning to him with a smile and a blush, "you chanced to hear what my father and I were talking about. Happily there is no one whom I should so little regret overhearing us."

"And why so?"

"Because, in the first place, it is a subject which will not interest you sufficiently to dwell on your memory; and secondly, anything of that nature I am confident would be as safe with you as with ourselves."

"Miss Gage," said Sir Philip, looking

earnestly at her, "I am a great many years older than you."

"That you must be," said Elizabeth, "for I remember you grown up when I was a child; yet you see how little difference there is now. You were alluding to the ball, were you not? You have outlived your taste for dancing, and I always felt too old for it."

"Permit me," said Sir Philip, surveying her still more earnestly, "to ask if you are disengaged."

"Perfectly; as soon as I have sealed this note," said Elizabeth, lighting the taper. "Do you think of going to S—— this morning? You can see the Cathedral, but you will be too late for service; you had better defer it till to-morrow."

But while she was speaking, she turned her head away to avoid his grave regard, a drop of wax fell on her finger.

"There!" said Sir Philip, taking her hand and examining it attentively, "you

have burnt your finger. How very careless; you were not looking at what you were doing."

"True," said Elizabeth, smiling at the blunt way in which he showed his interest; "it is a trick I have of burning my fingers when I seal letters; and to-day is Friday, I must tell, papa. He is very superstitious about Fridays."

"Tell him also that I love you sincerely," said Sir Philip, "that I demand of him this hand; that I do not know how to recommend myself to you, and that he must therefore be my friend."

"You, Sir Philip, I cannot express to you my astonishment."

"I wonder who could remain for three weeks in a house with you," said Sir Philip, with a blunt admiration in his look and voice, "without coming to the same pass. You are not angry."

"No, Sir Philip," she replied.

"You are all candour, I know you would speak the truth at once. I am more happy

than I dared to hope," said her companion.

Elizabeth smiled and looked down.

"Well, now," said Sir Philip, taking both her hands, "will you have the goodness to fix a day for our marriage? You see I am ordered abroad for my health, and naturally I wish to take you with me."

"Really, Sir Philip," said Elizabeth, "you are too hasty; consider how short a time we have known each other."

"I have known Captain Gage a long time," said Sir Philip, "I was his first lieutenant when he was on the West India station; that is the same thing. How many times I have said to myself, 'I will marry Gage's daughter; if she will not have me, it is easy for me to remain single.'"

Elizabeth started. How often had she, in rejecting her lovers, said in her turn, "until I meet with some one like Sir Philip d'Eyncourt, I will never marry."

"And yet you did not recollect me, that evening," said she.

"I expressed myself badly," he replied, "I meant that I could not trace any resemblance between what you were, and what I now find you. You were a very nice little girl; you are, a beautiful woman."

"And you have learned to flatter," said Elizabeth blushing.

"No, it is just my opinion, now I am going to find your father. It seems quite singular to ask Gage to accept me as a son-in-law. He is not a dozen years older than I am."

A few weeks after this conversation, Captain Gage had the satisfaction of bestowing his daughter's hand upon Sir Philip d'Eyncourt: and a few days afterwards, Margaret who had officiated as one of the bridesmaids, accompanied her uncle to the sea-side; for he had at last consented to listen to his physician, and to consider his illness of importance.

CHAPTER XI.

And now that hope and joy are seen to fade,
Like stars dim gliding till they mix with shade ;
Now that thy cheek has sorrow's canker proved
When thus by sickness changed, ah ! more beloved.

ELTON.

"AVELINE, my love, it is impossible that you can ride the pony to-day. Pray give up the idea. Do you not agree with me, Mr. Haveloc ?"

Mr. Haveloc was always appealed to, for Aveline had become irritable ; a phase of her complaint upon which her sweet temper and habitual self-command had no influence.

"No, you cannot ride to-day," said Mr. Haveloc, approaching the easy chair in

which she was sitting, propped up with pillows; "you frightened us all too much yesterday. You are hardly out of your fainting-fit, and you wish to bring on another. Consider our nerves!"

Aveline looked up at him and smiled, even her mother had not the control over her that he had.

"But look," she said, "what beautiful weather; it is hard that I should remain in the house all day. You know I cannot walk. What am I to do?"

"Shall I row you," he said, "you can have as many pillows as you like; and you may lie as quietly as you would on the sofa."

"No," said Aveline, "I am afraid that my head would not bear the motion of the boat."

"And yet you thought of riding," said Mr. Haveloc, with a smile.

This was an imprudent remark, sick people require managing.

"Riding is quite different!" said Aveline

angrily; "you do not know how to distinguish!"

Fortunately with all his impatience of temper, she never roused it. He pitied her too deeply; and without feeling the slightest attachment to her in the ordinary sense of the term, he had become very fond of her; he was won by the reliance she had placed in him for every thing.

He met Mrs. Fitzpatrick's eyes turned gratefully upon him, and smiled.

"No; I know nothing about it," he said, leaning over Aveline's chair, "I have no experience in illness. I cannot measure your strength."

"Then," said Aveline with a slight want of consistency, "what should you advise me to do?"

"Let us wheel you in this chair upon the grass; there you can enjoy the sea breeze, and you will be in the shade."

Aveline agreed to this, and she was soon established under the trees, with a

little table at her elbow on which stood a glass of water, a plate of hot-house grapes, and a splendid cluster of flowers.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick with her work on one side of the chair, Mr. Haveloc on the grass with a book.

"What are you reading, Mr. Haveloc, that makes you smile?"

"Boiardo, there is something so dry in his manner."

"Do not read to yourself, it fidgets me," said Aveline.

Mr. Haveloc closed his book, and began throwing pebbles on the beach below them.

"Have you much of this pink clematis, Mr. Haveloc," asked Aveline, examining her bouquet.

"There is one plant of it."

"Have you them in any other colour?"

"Yes; in white. But I brought you the pink because it is the greatest novelty."

"Bring me both kinds to-morrow."

"I will."

"And some of the heaths you were talking about."

"Yes; you shall have a splendid bouquet to-morrow."

"Your gardens will be quite devastated, Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"That will be of no consequence," he said.

"I wish, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, "that you would shoot me a partridge, I should like it for my dinner."

It was the first of September. Now if she had asked him to shoot her a golden eagle, it would have been just as much in his power. He was too near-sighted to shoot; and moreover he had not applied for permission to shoot any where that year. He looked to Mrs. Fitzpatrick for assistance.

"You know, my love," said her mother, "it could not be in time for your dinner to day."

"Yes; I would wait for it," said Aveline.

"The truth is," said Mr. Haveloc, "I am no marksman, my sight is so bad that I could not distinguish a partridge on that walk."

"You say that only to teaze me;" said Aveline, "you can always see mamma when she comes out of the avenue."

"But then your mamma is something larger than a partridge," said Mr. Haveloc.

"Then I am to go without it, I suppose," said Aveline.

"No, for I will go to the next town and bring you one."

"And what shall I do without you all that while;" asked Aveline impatiently.

At this moment, Mr. Lindsay appeared at the drawing-room window, and joined the party on the lawn.

"What are you all caballing about," he asked.

"Aveline has a fancy for a partridge, Mr. Lindsay," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick; "how shall I get one?"

"I have brought one with me," said Mr. Lindsay, "I left it with your cook."

"I am glad you did not depend on me," said Mr. Haveloc, "I should have blundered over the turnip fields all day, and brought you nothing."

"Well, do not you find it very warm," said Mr. Lindsay, "beautiful grapes you have! Where do they come from?"

"Taste them, doctor," said Aveline, "Mr. Haveloc brought them."

The doctor looked at Mr. Haveloc, gave a slight shake of the head, and tasted the grapes. He believed him under the illusion of an attachment to Aveline; for middle-aged people are apt to consider the affections as illusions. But he pitied him, as he would have done any one suffering under a nervous complaint, for he knew that while they last, nervous complaints are as definite as the loss of a limb.

But soon these fits of irritation disappeared altogether; she became placid, grateful, tender; her strength was ebbing away.

Mr. Haveloc came in the morning, only

to depart at night. His attention was unremitting; and Aveline seemed only to live in his presence. To wait for his coming; to kindle into life at his footstep; to rest for hours content to look at him; to talk to him on religious subjects, in which he became the learner, and she unconsciously, the teacher. These privileges as she considered them, soothed her later hours, and softened her pilgrimage to the grave. It was not the "Valley of the Shadow" to her. She possessed the sacred support, the healing consolation of a profound religious conviction, which she had not delayed till that hour to seek and to enjoy; and her sickness had purchased for her what she never could have obtained in the days of her beauty and health—the companionship of the person she loved. And, always in extremes, he devoted himself to her comfort with a zeal that astonished Mrs. Fitzpatrick. He seemed to know intuitively how to arrange her flowers—to move her pillows, how to amuse her when

she was calm, and to be silent when she was weary. He knew how to draw her attention from her mother on those rare occasions when Mrs. Fitzpatrick gave way to a burst of sorrow. He was her confidant in those trifling arrangements for the future with which she was unwilling to disturb her mother's feelings.

And to her subdued and serious state of mind, her attachment to him took the quiet colour of her other thoughts. She knew that she had done with life; and her affection for him was such as she might carry beyond the tomb.

And thus subdued by illness, yet sustained by the brightest hopes, she tranquilly awaited the moment when her Angel should summon her from the earth.

CHAPTER XII.

Soph. You powers, that take into your care the guard
Of innocence, aid me! for I am a creature
So forfeited to despair, hope cannot fancy
A ransom to redeem me. . . . .
. . . . . Was't for this he left me
And, on a feigned pretence—

THE PICTURE.

It would be too adventurous an incident to introduce if this tale were an invention instead of a narrative of facts, that Mr. Grey was ordered by his physician to a part of the coast very near to that where Mrs. Fitzpatrick's cottage was situate. Not a mile of rough hilly ground divided their dwellings from each other. This choice of a *locale* was very easily accounted for.

Mr. Warde was acquainted with Mr. Fletcher, the clergyman of the parish, and wrote to beg him to select a house for his friend. Mr. Fletcher did his best, but houses were not plentiful in that district. It was a pretty cottage, but really deserving of no other name. Mr. Grey did not enjoy it at all; he missed the luxuries of his own house. The casements did not shut, the chimnies smoked. There was no piano for Margaret, and Land's room was so small as to be a daily source of disquiet to his master. He was more annoyed for others than for himself. Little did Margaret think when she went down to the sea-side every morning, and sat patiently by her uncle's chair with her book and her work, that the person who most occupied her mind, was within so short a distance, engaged in the same sort of pursuit, in watching over the declining health of a friend.

But her uncle grew weaker and more restless; he determined to return to Ash-

dale; and having once fixed the day, he seemed more comfortable in his mind.

"Do you like the idea of it, my child?" said he to Margaret, "shall you not be glad to get back to Ashdale?"

"Very glad, Sir," returned Margaret.

"It must be dull, indeed, for you," said Mr. Grey in a pitying tone, "not a single soul here that we know. We might, to be sure, know the clergyman; but he gets a holiday exactly at the wrong time, and the man who does his duty for him does not live in the place Not a shop to be seen, nor anything for the child to read but the paper; and that she does not care about, poor little thing."

"Oh, uncle! if you were well I should not find it dull," said Margaret, "I should enjoy the sea and the beautiful rocks above everything. But when there is anything the matter, one always feels safer at home."

Mr. Grey smiled, and said something as he went away about wishing to see Case-

ment again, in which desire Margaret could not join.

As it was his habit to rest in his own room during the afternoon, Margaret took her work into the porch, and sat enjoying the sea breeze, and watching the picturesque road that wound beneath the cottage along the shore. She had found out that when the mind is anxious and distressed, the best thing she could do was to work. Her thoughts could not be compelled to study, and her needle passed the time a little more calmly and quickly than when she was doing nothing. And now a labourer might be seen driving a cart drawn by a yoke of oxen along the rugged way; and then a couple of children carrying between them a basket which they had been sent to fill at the neighbouring village; and but for such rare passengers, the road was quiet all day long. While she sat, thinking of the one subject that filled her mind when she could divert it for a moment from her uncle's illness;

thinking over all that Mr. Haveloc had ever said and done at Ashdale, she saw, advancing up the path a figure that made her start and colour, it was—she felt sure of it—Hubert Gage.

He was walking very fast, opened the rustic gate himself, and hastened up to her.

Her first thought was a fear about Elizabeth.

"Bessy is well, I hope?" said she eagerly.

"Quite well. At last I see you again! How difficult you have made this to me! How impossible it was at Ashdale to gain speech of you even for a moment!"

"Have you long returned from Ireland?" said Margaret, feeling greatly embarrassed by the tone of her companion.

"Long? This instant! As soon as I learned where you were, I followed you."

"And Bessy is really well?"

"Bessy? Yes," said he in a tone of impatience. "Let me speak about yourself. Margaret, you have done me a great

injustice, and you have not given me the means of defending myself. You have thought me incapable of loving you as you deserved."

Margaret held up her hand as if to stop him, he seized it, and pressed it to his lips.

"I tell you what, Mr. Hubert Gage, this will not do," said Margaret gravely, regaining possession of her hand; there is a great want of consideration in your conduct. I am sure you pay very little regard to my tranquillity in coming here. My uncle is very ill, and all my time and thoughts are occupied in attending upon him. I have no time, and I must say no patience for these scenes."

Land came down at this moment with Mr. Grey's compliments, and "hearing Mr. Hubert was below, hoped he would stop to dinner."

He accepted the invitation, then turning to Margaret, as Land disappeared, said:—

"I will retract. I will go back instantly if you will make me one promise—I have a right to claim it; a right from all you have made me suffer. Give me the means of seeing you. I have not had fair play—you have not allowed me to address you—to seek to gain your confidence, your love. Cruel! to make your refusal so absolute; to leave me no hope; but I will not be so repulsed: you know nothing of me as yet. Why deny me—"

"Mr. Hubert, you will not listen to me," said Margaret, anxious to bring the dialogue to a conclusion.

"You are so charming! You look a thousand-fold more beautiful than when I saw you last. But what of your beauty? Nothing to that angelic disposition which animates all you do. You thought me so trifling that I could not comprehend your heart. Margaret, it was that which made me seek you."

"I am very sorry that I wronged you so far," said Margaret. "I did not think it

was your nature to care much—to love much,—I mean to be much in earnest about anything. If, indeed," said she, marking the distressed expression of his countenance, "your happiness is disturbed, I am still more sorry; but I can do nothing. I cannot tell you falsely that I shall ever change."

"You will not! See what you do! You have made my whole life wretched—worse than that, useless. I can settle to nothing. I cannot leave the country where you are. But I will not despair. You shall see more of me—you shall love me yet."

"There is one thing," said Margaret with a little air of triumph, "we leave this place on Thursday."

"So much the better," said Hubert, "for I shall be very near you at Chirke Weston."

Margaret looked vexed and undecided. She thought there was but one way to put a stop to his assiduities; and although

with great reluctance, she resolved to adopt it.

"You compel me to be very plain with you, Mr. Hubert," she said; "but I cannot see any other means of convincing you that we can be no more than friends to one another. I am engaged to another person."

"Engaged! How is it possible? How can I believe it? You so young—and living so retired. May I ask if Mr. Grey is aware of this engagement?"

"He is," said Margaret.

"Why then it is Claude Haveloc!" said Hubert, leaning against the side of the porch.

Margaret was silent. He remained standing, apparently much disturbed.

"And you are engaged to Claude Haveloc?" said he, throwing himself on the seat beside her.

Her colour mounted; but she made a gesture of assent.

He remained for some moments apparently undecided as to what he should say or do; and then looking up suddenly, took her hand.

"Forget me if you will," he said; "but never give a thought to him again."

"Mr. Hubert!" said Margaret, colouring with anger.

"He is entirely unworthy of you; it is the talk of the village beyond you there; he is paying his addresses to a young lady who is dying of a consumption. But his attentions for weeks have been too marked to admit of a doubt. He is pitied and praised by every one. He is daily and all day at the house."

"Well that can be explained. I will ask him," said Margaret, trying to speak calmly.

"You can do better than ask him. You can see and judge for yourself. Walk past the house at any hour, and find him, as I saw him, at the feet of your rival."

A thought for one moment crossed the

mind of Margaret: she would revenge herself for this neglect—she would accept the hand of Hubert Gage. But she felt at once the unworthiness of such an idea, and remained trembling and silent, looking on the ground.

"Where is this house?" said she after a short pause.

"I can show it to you better than I could describe it," he replied. "It was in searching for you that I lighted upon this history."

"I am much indebted to you," said she with a strange smile.

Her manner, usually so soft, seemed suddenly to change. There was something cold and bitter in her voice.

"And what will you do?" he asked.

"After dinner, when my uncle sleeps, I walk out," said Margaret; "you can then show me this house."

Her seeming calmness quite deceived him; he thought that she was not suffering much. That once convinced her lover

had wronged her, she might be wooed and won again.

"I am going to my uncle now," said she. "I shall see you at dinner;" and taking up her work-basket she left him.

Hubert did not see her again until dinner was announced; she was then standing by her uncle's chair, and seemed to take no notice of his presence. Mr. Grey welcomed him very kindly; he thought Hubert's visit so amiable, so well-meant. It showed that he did not resent what had happened.

He asked a number of questions about Captain Gage, and the d'Eyncourt's, about his own plans and proceedings; and about their neighbours at Ashdale. Hubert with his eyes fixed on Margaret answered at cross purposes.

Margaret was perfectly silent. She helped the dishes before her with the mechanical accuracy of a person in a dream. She ate nothing herself, and seemed hardly to know that any one was at table. As soon as the

cloth was removed, she rose. Hubert who had watched in vain for some word or sign which might tell him that she held to her intention of the morning, followed her to the door.

She turned as she left the room, and, in a whisper almost inaudible, uttered the word "wait." Mr. Grey soon afterwards apologised for leaving his guest; he was obliged to retire early. Margaret would be in the drawing-room; he hoped Hubert would stay and drink tea.

Hubert took leave of Mr. Grey, and waited until the twilight came, and was succeeded by the broad moonlight, and still Margaret did not appear. At last, when he thought of going into the house to seek her, for he was sauntering up and down the small garden, he saw her standing in the doorway, wrapped in a large shawl.

"Am I too late?" she said, as he approached her.

"Are you ready?" he returned.

"I am," said she, shivering, and hurry-

ing into the garden, "my uncle sleeps. Heaven knows whether I shall ever sleep again! There have been treasures paid for knowledge that might have bought a world of peace twice told. You know that some knowledge brings death in its train. Lead me on; if you dare."

Her eyes flashed, even through the twilight; she drew herself up and assumed an air of defiance that he could not have believed possible to her soft and exquisite beauty. He had yet to learn what it was to rouse a gentle nature.

Hubert paused beneath the shrubs in the small garden.

"Choose;" he said, "I do not say that knowledge is not pain; and ignorance, the grossest ignorance, content. You have not now to learn that I love you. You can give what faith you please to my accusation."

"I cannot doubt you," said Margaret, "let us make haste; I shall never go if I do not go soon. I am sick—sick."

They passed down the shady lane, where

the moonlight traced a fair trellis-work of boughs and leaves upon the rocky path; and at every step, as the road grew more uneven, and as Hubert supported her over the rugged stones, she cried to him to make haste. She went like one who walked in her sleep, still struggling for swiftness, and more and more unable to stir as her wish to move grew more pressing. Hubert almost carried her the few last steps of the way; and there stood the cottage by the side of the hill, where it broke gently away down to the sea shore. The waves rippled and sank down upon the beach to a low sweet music that seemed almost charged with words, so clear and measured was the sound in that still night.

Margaret stopped for breath, and hung heavily upon his arm. Then the thought crossed her mind that if Mr. Haveloc was innocent, and came there by chance, finding her walking alone with Hubert Gage, what would he think?

"Oh, Heaven!" she said, clasping her

hands in agony, "forget that you love me —speak to me as a sister. Is this true?"

"I never pressed you to believe me," answered her companion.

"Oh, true, true!" said Margaret, hastening on.

She had hardly gone three paces when she stopped again.

"Coward that I am," said she, "to pry upon his actions; to seek these miserable means of learning his pursuits. He trusts me wholly. I will ask him what he does there visiting so often; and if—if he loves her better, let him go. I would set free an Emperor, if he was willing to be released. I'll not go on. I'll learn nothing this way."

She was gasping for breath. Hubert Gage turned without another word, and held out his hand to conduct her back again, but she repulsed him, and stood clasping her temples with a force that seemed designed to hold in her reason.

"If you think," said she very slowly, for she was collecting her ideas, "that I

shall like you better when I have learned to hate him, know, once for all, that you will be more intolerable in my eyes than Claude himself."

He looked distressed, but made no answer.

She paused a moment, and then said in a more quiet tone. "Be sure you say nothing of all this to my uncle; it would so vex him. He is not well enough—"

He gave her this promise; and having reached the garden fence, he said he would wait for her while she went down the terrace walk. She made him a sign of silence, and stole gently forward till she came under the verandah. The drawing-room windows were unclosed, and she heard and saw all that passed within. A sofa was drawn close to the window, on which reclined a girl of seventeen, who still retained much of the graceful beauty that had distinguished her. Tall and slight, the full muslin wrapper in part concealed the wasting influence of that disease which

had so nearly fulfilled its task. Her eyes, with their long black fringes, seemed to take a disproportioned share in her face, and her profuse dark hair, which had been wound in large folds at the back of her head, had fallen in long tresses like broad ribbons over the cushions that she lay upon. She was reclining, half supported in a sitting posture by Mr. Haveloc. Her head leaned on his shoulder, and her splendid eyes rested on his face as if she knew there was a very little time for her to impress every feature on her memory. He sat quite silent for some minutes, and Aveline's wasted hand lay passively in his. At last she said with a soft smile, still gazing at him as though she feared to lose a moment of his sight,—

"The moon will change soon, will it not, Mr. Haveloc?"

"To-morrow, I think," said he, kindly, not tenderly, for his was not a nature that could feign, though Margaret was too dizzy to mark the difference.

They were silent for a few moments, and then on some restless movement of Aveline's, he employed himself in altering the cushions.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who had been leaning her head against the mantel-piece as she sat, looked up at the slight noise which they made, and then dropped her head again, with that mute expression of anguish which the attitude can so eloquently convey.

"I hope you will not go away so early to-night, Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, as soon as her pillows were properly arranged, "You went so very early yesterday, and it is of no use, for I do not sleep the sooner for it."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick raised her head, and cast a look at Mr. Haveloc as though she would have said, "humour her," but she sank into her former position without speaking.

"I am sure, as long as you are not tired," he said, "I will stay until Mrs. Fitzpatrick thinks proper to turn me out of doors."

"Is mamma asleep?" said Aveline, who was listening for her mother's voice.

"Asleep, my love!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, in a tone that thrilled through Margaret, there was in it so much despair.

"We are all half asleep," said Mr. Haveloc. "Shall I ring for candles?"

"Do," said Aveline; "stay! do you see a figure—a shadow—there, in the verandah?"

Margaret heard no more. She turned, rushed from the terrace down the steps to the beach on the sands until the foam of the waves broke over her feet.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Hubert Gage, who had hastened after her. "What is it you intend? What are you going to do?"

"What should I do but go home?" said Margaret, turning quietly round. "I have seen what I came to see."

And turning away again, she began to walk rapidly.

"Speak to me," said he, after he had

followed her in silence for some time. "Tell me—am I to blame?"

Margaret shook her head.

"I cannot bear this silence," he said, after another pause. "Say something to me."

"What should I say?" asked Margaret, still walking on.

"Do you detest me?"

"You!—No."

They arrived before the gate of the cottage.

Margaret held out her hand to him.

"Good night," said she, in a calm voice. Let me see you to-morrow."

CHAPTER XIII.

Steig' empor, o Morgenroth, und röthe
Mit purpurnem Küsse Hain und Feld!
Säus'le nieder, Abendroth und Flöte
Sanft in Schlummer die erstorb'ne Welt;
Morgen—ach! Du röthest
Eine Todtensflor,
Ach! und du, o Abendroth! umflötest
Meinen langen Schlummer nur.

SCHILLER.

"THERE is no one in the verandah," said Mr. Haveloc, coming back to the side of Aveline. "It was your fancy. You have not yet forgotten the gipsy."

Aveline smiled, and signed to him to take a chair close to the sofa.

"I am easy now," she said. "I will not move again."

He looked anxiously at her, and thought there was something strange in the expression of her features. It seemed as if she had lost her control over them, and that her smile was involuntary.

"Mamma!" said she suddenly, in a quick, sharp tone.

Her mother hastened to her side.

"Keep close to me, mamma," she said.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick, seated on the side of the sofa, held her daughter's hand.

"Do you feel worse, my love?" she whispered.

"No; better," returned Aveline, in a clear voice.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick trembled excessively, but controlled all other sign of emotion. She looked anxiously at Mr. Haveloc, as she often did, to read his opinion. His eyes were fixed on the ground.

"Mr. Haveloc," said Aveline, in a voice perfectly free from emotion, "you will recollect to tell Mr. Fletcher that Mr. Lucas was very kind, and gave me much comfort."

"He returns to-morrow. I hope you

will be well enough to see him yourself," said Mr. Haveloc.

Aveline looked at him, and marked the unquiet expression of his face.

"See how few wishes I have," said she; "how everything has been anticipated by your kindness," turning her eyes upon her mother. "I have nothing left to say at this hour."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as white as marble, pressed her daughter's hand to her lips.

Mr. Haveloc, struck with awe at the presentiment which seemed to fall upon them all, did not venture to speak.

"Mamma—little Jane," said Aveline, after a pause.

"Yes, my love; you know we arranged that matter the other day," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, with wonderful calmness.

"Yes—yes," said Aveline.

"I think," said Mr. Haveloc, looking at Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I had better ring for Mrs. Grant."

"Who's that?" asked Aveline quickly.

"It was I who spoke," said Mr. Haveloc. "I wished to send for your nurse, for I do not like you to be up at this hour."

"No — no; do not move me," said Aveline.

"It shall be as you like; but I know you will not sleep here," said Mr. Haveloc.

"No more sleep," said Aveline, as if to herself.

She remained with her eyes fixed on the ceiling, where, owing to some reflection of the lights, there was a broad luminous spot.

There was a long, deep silence. Mrs. Fitzpatrick was praying inwardly. Aveline still remained with her eyes uplifted, breathing short and quick.

All at once the stillness was broken by her voice repeating, in a distinct tone—

"'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff comfort me.'"

Those who have watched by a sick per-

son only can tell with what touching solemnity the words of Scripture will appear invested when coming suddenly from their lips in the stillness of night.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick's firmness gave way; she burst into tears. Aveline made no remark. She did not seem to notice her companions.

At last she said, in allusion to their conversation sometime ago.

"But nurse may come."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick rang the bell. Mrs. Grant entered; but Aveline was again abstracted.

The good old woman sat down behind the sofa, making a sign to them to be silent. She had seen for some days better than any one that the end was approaching.

"Is the tide down, Mr. Haveloc?" asked Aveline, with difficulty.

Mrs. Grant shuddered. The superstition, respecting the influence of the tides over the dying is well known. She

profoundly believed that her young lady would be released when the tide changed.

Mr. Haveloc walked to the window, and looked out. The long range of low green rocks, was not yet quite uncovered by the ebbing waves. The moom gleamed over their slippery surface, and the water rose and fell bubbling among their crevices.

"Not quite yet," said he coming back to the couch.

"Not quite yet," she repeated. Then with a stronger effort, she said, "I wished to thank you both."

"My dearest!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick bending over her.

"You are not crying!" said Aveline, trying to draw her hand in a caressing manner over her mother's face; "not for me!"

"No, not for you, my child," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

"Mamma, it is coming," said Aveline, almost inaudibly.

"What, is coming, my love?" asked her mother.

Aveline made no answer—all her senses seemed to have failed her at once.

"God be praised!" said Mrs. Grant, rising with the dignity, that true emotion always gives: "God be praised! she is now an angel in Heaven!"

CHAPTER XIV.

And some will die, these are the gentle hearted,
Shook down like flowers by early frost: and some
Will grow in scorn and bitterness of heart,
As giving unto others, the full measure
Of that which hath been meted unto them.
Some look to Heaven, and garner up their hearts
Where disappointment cannot touch them more;
And these few are the wise; but there be many,
Whose life is stronger than their agony,
And one outlasts the other.—Pity them.

ANON.

As soon as it was possible the next morning, Hubert Gage, paid the visit that Margaret had almost demanded of him the evening before. The most favoured suitor might have felt gratified by the eagerness with which she evidently awaited his approach; for she was standing half way down the pathway of the garden, watching

him as he neared the cottage. His embarrassment was far greater than her own, he hardly dared raise his eyes to her face, and when he did so, he was as much startled by its steady and fixed expression, as by the icy paleness that overspread her features.

"I desired to see you again," she said, when he reached her, "I was very foolish and unreasonable, yesterday; and I was anxious that no friend of mine should go away with such an impression of me. I wished to meet you when I was calm again. You see, Mr. Hubert, that I consider you as a friend."

"A friend!" he exclaimed; "if the devotion of my whole life could supply—"

"Stop!" cried Margaret, in a tone of suffering, so much at variance with the even calmness of her first address, that he felt appalled by it. "If all you have ever professed for me has not been a mockery and an insult, you will spare me this. You will feel as securely as if the future were

the past, that I can never love again. You will not offend me, if you value the friendship and regard I have yet to give, by imagining that I can at any period listen to such language."

"Then, there is nothing but misery in store for both of us," said Hubert Gage.

"I do not look forward with so much despondency as you do, Mr. Hubert," said Margaret, "even now in the first anguish of discovery and despair; in all the shame and the agony of having been duped and trifled with—a suffering that you can never fully comprehend; I look forward more courageously than you do. Let me first speak of myself. I have often heard of a dream of entire happiness—a state of being, too brilliant to last; dispelled by accident, or misfortune, or death. My dream has been dispelled. All is over with me but life and its duties; but I have no suspense and I sometimes think that suspense is the only torture under which we cannot be still. Any thing else, believe me, Mr. Hubert, is endurable. I wake to a deeper sense of the

duties of life; the great lesson which we should ever learn by the loss of its pleasures. Let me urge the same thing upon you. You have, forgive me, in seeking a happiness that has been denied you, lost sight of all that is better than happiness. As I have been somewhat the cause of this, let me, if I can, atone it. Let me, if you esteem me—I hope you do—urge you to retrieve this great mistake. Let me entreat you to resume your profession—to direct your mind to subjects worthy of your energy and your talent. You know how you would delight your father by this determination; and let it be your great consolation, as it is mine, that when happiness is denied to ourselves, we have still the power of conferring it upon others; and while we keep in mind that there is a Heaven above us, let us not concern ourselves too deeply with the thorns beneath our feet."

As Margaret spoke with an earnestness of feeling that forced the tears from her

eyes, the soft but strong west wind brought distinctly to the porch where they sat, the sound of a passing bell.

The tones were so appropriate; they seemed so completely the echo of her sentiments, that both remained perfectly silent for some time. Margaret thought that her companion was moved by her words, for he remained with his face hidden in his hands; and still at intervals, the dull sound struck upon their ears.

"There," he said looking up at length, "that is the knell of the poor girl you saw yesterday."

"Is it?" said Margaret, "I envy her," and she dried her eyes once or twice; but she scarcely had power left to weep. She had passed half the night in tears, and she was now feeling the exhaustion which follows strong emotion. "But I am surprised;" she said, "I should never have imagined that she was as near her end. It is a very treacherous complaint. Is it not?"

"I believe so," he returned absently.

"The poor mother!" said Margaret, her voice trembling, "what sad distress there is all around us in this world, and others are suffering too, Mr. Hubert; there is no sorrow like the death of those we love."

"You are thinking of Haveloc," said her companion, "it galls me to hear you speak of him with compassion."

"And yet I think, Mr. Hubert," said Margaret, "that you would forgive your greatest enemy under such affliction, and even speak kindly of him; indeed, I am sure you would."

"I must go away," he exclaimed, "I cannot stand this. Every instant you make yourself more dear to me. I cannot resolve to abandon the hope of one day winning your regard."

"Shall I try and argue you out of it?" said Margaret, "shall I convince you that, like most quiet people my feelings are very tenacious; and that when I say I have done with love, I do not make use of the expression common to disappointed women, but

that I speak a determination that can never undergo any change. And yet I assure you, Mr. Hubert, that my friendship is worth having. For instance, I give you very good advice."

Margaret tried to speak cheerfully, but the smile would not come.

"I will follow it to the letter," said he; "you shall never see me again until I can say proudly that I have proved myself worthy of your interest. If all women would so use their influence"—He paused, unable, from emotion, to complete his sentence.

Margaret changed the subject.

"My uncle is better to-day than he has been for some time," she said, "I think the prospect of going home has wrought this change, and I hope that when he is once settled comfortably again at Ashdale, his improvement will be rapid."

"I hope so," said Hubert, "but my present anxiety is about yourself; how am I ever to hear of you?"

"If you are kindly anxious to learn how I am, I dare say Bessy will tell you as much in her letters," said Margaret; "but I expect my life to be so monotonous henceforth, that I shall furnish nothing but a bulletin."

"I must live upon that, then," he said. "*Well and Single.* That will be something for me to hear. And if I could not catch some of your fortitude," he added, looking admiringly at her calm face, "I should be unworthy of the name of a man But you do not know how hard it is for me to leave you while you are looking so ill. You did not sleep last night."

"Sleep, no!" said Margaret, with *naiveté?*

"And I am afraid," said Hubert, "that you will not take proper care of yourself without some one to overlook your proceedings."

"There is one great cure for my ailments. "Time," said Margaret, tranquilly; "and I think his wings, or wheels will move

as well in your absence as in your presence, Mr. Hubert."

"That is true, I cannot hasten the movements of your physician," said Hubert, with a smile.

"That is right," said Margaret, rising, "let us part now, cheerfully."

"Well, but give me your commands," he replied, "you cannot tell the charm of following implicitly the direction of a person one loves."

"You know them, I think," said Margaret smiling, "you are to go to sea; and you are to remember the days, when every English gentleman was a scholar, as well as a soldier. And as you are a sailor, you will find no difficulty in following the examples of Elizabeth's reign. In fact, when I see you again, I shall find you very like your father. You must come in, and say good bye to my uncle, for perhaps when you return again to England, you may regret that you had not taken leave of so old a friend."

She passed into the house: her uncle was

in his arm chair, drawn close to the fire, he was as chilly as ever in that summer weather.

"Mr. Hubert Gage is come to take leave of you, uncle," said Margaret leaning over his chair.

"Oh! these leave-takings," said Mr. Grey turning and offering his hand to Hubert; "they are the worst part of life. And where are you going, my dear friend?"

"To sea, if I can get afloat," said Hubert.

"The very best thing in the world," said Mr. Grey. "Your father is delighted, is he not?"

"I do not think he knows of my resolution; it was rather sudden," said Hubert with some confusion of manner.

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Grey "and I am going home, Hubert."

There was a slight accent on the word "home" that quite unnerved poor Margaret.

"That poor child is not well," said Mr. Grey; "she distresses herself about my health; and sickness is almost the only

suffering that we cannot spare our friends. Well, good bye, and may God bless you !"

The tone was so much more solemn than was common with Mr. Grey, that it seemed like a last farewell.

Hubert Gage wrung his hand in silence, and left him.

The next day they set out on their return home. Mr. Grey was perfectly happy at the idea of seeing Ashdale again. Margaret was glad of change and motion. To her uncle's anxious inquiries, she always replied that she was pretty well, and he imagined that she looked so pale from her close attendance upon himself.

As they drew near Ashdale, he greeted each familiar object with as much satisfaction as if he had been absent for years instead of weeks. Every cottage, every brook, every turn in the road, aroused his attention.

Margaret shivered as the carriage drew up before the house ; she dreaded the recollections which those familiar rooms would bring to her mind.

The fire was burning brightly in the drawing-room. Mr. Casement was standing on the hearth-rug. This circumstance completed Mr. Grey's satisfaction. It was really like home, with Mr. Casement at the fire-side.

Margaret trembling and shivering, and hardly able to restrain her tears, now crouched over the fire, which was as welcome to her as to her uncle

"Holloa, little woman! you are the invalid now, it seems," said Mr. Casement, marking her altered looks.

"The child is tired; don't talk to her, Casement," said Mr. Grey.

"Oh! have you heard the news of Master Claude?" asked Mr. Casement. "He has been courting again; that's all. I never knew such a fellow."

"Nonsense; I never listen to such reports," said Mr. Grey. "I don't believe one word of it!"

"Very well—ask old Warde; that's all. It was he who told me," said Mr. Casement,

persisting in his news because he saw it annoyed his old friend.

"I will never believe it; I know him better," said Mr. Grey.

"Well, well! I did not accuse him of any crime: did I, little woman?"

"Not at all, Sir," said Margaret steadily.

Mr. Grey looked at Margaret with a smile. He was re-assured by her calm voice, she no more believed the report than he did; so he turned the subject, and thought no more about it.

But his return home, to which he had looked forward with so much pleasure, did not produce the good effect he had wished and expected. He grew daily weaker, more unfit for exertion, either of mind or body. At last, when it became too great an exertion to leave his room, and when he was unable to sit up for more than a few hours in a day, he said to Margaret one evening that he had felt more languid than usual, "My child, I think you must write to Claude Haveloc. Tell him that I desire to see him without delay."

CHAPTER XV.

Oh ! sir, I did love you
With such a fixed heart, that in that minute
Wherein you slighted or betrayed me rather;
I took a vow to obey your last decree,
And never more look up to any hope,
Should bring me comfort that way.
Your suit to me,
Henceforth be ever silenced.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was gifted with a mind of unusual strength ; but for some days all the fortitude that she possessed, seemed to abandon her. She found, like many others, that often as she had pictured to herself what must come, all her imaginings fell far short of the desolation, and the anguish of the reality.

Mr. Haveloc took upon himself all those arrangements which are so painful to the survivors. She did not see him, but she occasionally sent him a few words in pencil expressive of her wishes. She had very few relations, and those few resided far in the north of Ireland; and the only connexion of her husband whom he had ever heard her name was Lord Raymond, whose estate of Wardenscourt lay within a few miles of his own. He wrote to this nobleman, giving him notice of Aveline's death, in common with the other relations; and greatly to his surprise, Lord Raymond answered his letter in person as soon as it was possible.

He was a very well-meaning man, and he thought that it would be a mark of attention to Mrs. Fitzpatrick, and to the memory of her husband, if he were to attend the funeral of their child; for they had so few connections left, that but for him she would have been followed to the grave by strangers.

He became Mr. Haveloc's guest for a week, and managed to pass the time

tolerably well considering that he was away from all his horses. In that retired spot, he did not feel obliged to confine himself to the house; he took to shooting sea-gulls, and obtained some little skill with the rifle. He watched over the Norwegian pony, and endeavoured to feel some interest in his proceedings; he helped Mr. Haveloc to feed him from the window with bread, and tried to bear in mind that he was a horse, and therefore an object of respect and importance. He wandered about the gardens and ate the fruit, and went out in a boat to visit the yacht; and expressed a wish to buy her, and gave up the idea, because he was not sure whether Lucy cared about cruising; and whenever his host appeared dejected, he endeavoured to condole with him, and very fortunately, was never able to do so, on account of his stammering.

And during the week that he stayed, he was known to write a letter; but lite-

rature was not his forte, and nobody ever saw him take up a book.

Whenever Mr. Haveloc went to the cottage to inquire after Mrs. Fitzpatick, he desired that his compliments and inquiries might be added to his own; and he usually inquired, at the same time, if Mrs. Fitzpatrick was not a very fine woman, adding that such was his recollection of her some years ago.

The day of the funeral arrived. Lord Raymond and Mr. Haveloc were the only persons who attended it.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick had desired to do so, but she had been peremptorily forbidden by her friend, Mr. Lindsay, and she acquiesced. Her spirit was too broken to attempt opposition, even in a thing of trifling importance.

She sent a few lines to Lord Raymond, thanking him for his kindness, but she declined the visit which he volunteered to pay her. She entertained a very reasonable estimate of the condolences of a stranger.

Two or three weeks elapsed before she

could nerve herself sufficiently to admit Mr. Haveloc ; but, at last, fearing that he might leave the neighbourhood without her seeing him, she appointed him to come.

Mr. Lindsay was with her in the drawing-room ; she looked dreadfully ill, and her hand was as cold as ice. Mr. Haveloc took a chair beside her, and in vain tried to speak. There was something so absolute in her bereavement, that he was dumb before her ; he felt the influence, for the first time, of that grief that "makes its owner great."

It fell to Mr. Lindsay to sustain the conversation.

"So you have not parted with your yatch yet, Mr. Haveloc," he said, "we shall lose a pretty object when she leaves this part of the coast."

"No ; I had nearly an opportunity of getting rid of her lately," said Mr. Haveloc, "I thought Lord Raymond would have—"

And he stopped suddenly, remembering that Lord Raymond had come to him expressly to attend Aveline's funeral.

"Ay—you find, like many other people, that it is much easier to purchase a toy than to part with it."

"Exactly."

"So many people want to sell, and so few care to buy," continued Mr. Lindsay.

"That is just the case."

"Do you know," said Mr. Lindsay, turning to Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as if it was a subject in which she must take a deep interest; "I feel sure we shall have a very fine autumn!"

"You think so! You are such an excellent judge of the weather," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick in a languid voice.

"I shall see the Pyrenees to advantage a month hence," said Mr. Haveloc.

"Ah! you are a traveller. It is singular that nobody stays at home now-a-days," said Mr. Lindsay. "I should like to know where you would see a finer country than your own?"

"I do not expect anything but novelty in my tour," said Mr. Haveloc.

"True. For you it is the best thing that could happen," said the doctor, with a look of commiseration. "Change of scene. Young people, my dear Mrs. Fitzpatrick, can run away from thought. You and I are obliged to trust to time alone."

It struck Mr. Haveloc that both the doctor, and Lord Raymond seemed to take for granted that he must have been attached to Aveline, for which, with his usual impatience, he set them down as idiots, and thought no more about it.

At last the doctor took his leave, and then Mrs. Fitzpatrick, turning to Mr. Haveloc, said to him with a steady voice, "I should like you, Mr. Haveloc, to take me to see Aveline's grave. I do not know where it is, and I could not ask any one else to point it out to me."

Mr. Haveloc consented directly. Mrs. Grant, who was still in the house, and came in with her mistress's walking-dress, was very reluctant that she should go. She

founded her objections upon the wet grass, and the quantity of rain that had fallen.

"My good, Mrs. Grant," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, as she fastened her shawl, "I wish a little damp grass could hurt me;" and turning to Mr. Haveloc, she repeated with a half smile. "When the mind's free, the body's delicate."

It was a soft fine evening. They walked slowly, and in silence towards the churchyard. Half hidden among the hills you descended the narrow shady lane, and came suddenly upon the quiet burying-ground, and small village church. The long shadows lay upon the graves; the rooks were wheeling and settling among the surrounding trees, and the rain had called out the mingled scent of flowers and shrubs from every thicket.

"It is very wet," said Mr. Haveloc, as they stepped on the long saturated grass.

"It does not matter," replied Mrs. Fitzpatrick. "Do you know," she added,

" that on the night of her funeral, I looked from my window, and was quite relieved to see the turf whitened by the broad moonlight. If the rain had beat on her grave that first night—but this is very weak."

" I cannot think so," said Mr. Haveloc. " I cannot believe that any of the natural feelings which we cherish for the remains of those who are dear to us, serve to be classed as weaknesses to be derided or overcome. I detest the philosophy which can analyse and reject the most sacred of our affections—that can strip death of the awe and the mystery which should protect and surround the breathless effigy destined to be immortal. A philosophy so blind that it sees but a heap of clay in the ashes that wait for the breath of God to summon them to Heaven!"

" You always feel strongly, you know," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick with a faint smile.

They had crossed the church-yard by this time, and stopped before a recent

grave. It was covered with white stone, and a cross of the same material carved in the early English fashion, bore the simple inscription of her name and age.

"Already!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "I am surprised. I had no idea that it could have been done so soon."

"It was placed here two days after the funeral," said Mr. Haveloc. "I did not choose that the spot should remain unmarked."

At another time, Mrs. Fitzpatrick would have smiled at the self-will which her companion was apt to display even in trifles; and have wondered how much it would avail him in the serious business of life. But now she leaned upon the cross absorbed in her own painful thoughts; her mind wandered involuntarily from scene to scene of her daughter's illness and death. Every tone, every change of countenance presented itself in turn to her memory.

All was perfectly still. It was very rare for a footstep, except on Sundays, to cross

that lovely spot. One benefit arising from a thinly scattered population, is the decent repose afforded to the dead. Here, the graves were not crowded, and there was no need to disturb them for the new inmates. The old mounds sank level with the soil, and the grey crumbling stones fell in every variety of position over the ground. The old unclipped yew trees, feathered down to the earth, and sheltered the north side of the ground from the cold winds.

It was not infested, as in populous places, with the rude children of the lower classes, filling the place with discordant sounds and hideous gestures, and spurning with their coarse feet the earth that had been consecrated to so solemn a purpose.

At last, Mr. Haveloc interrupted the reverie of his companion.

"It is late," he said, "and you are quite wet I fear. Let me advise you to return home."

"Home!" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick mourn-

fully. "To what do I return? I am less solitary here, than I am in my own house."

"You must be persuaded," said he, leading her from the tomb. "Mrs. Grant will, I am sure, be wretched until she sees you again."

"It is true," said she, "I ought not to indulge in such feelings. How silent! How ineffably still! I feel so deeply the fitness and the luxury of this calm that surrounds the dead, now that I also have a treasure buried here."

They walked homewards. Their footsteps rustled in the long grass; and the latch of the wicket fell with a sharp sound, so deep was the quiet of the place.

At the gate of the cottage they met the postman; always late, and often very irregular in that village. He knew Mr. Haveloc by sight; and, glad to escape a walk to his residence, he touched his hat, and presented him with a letter.

The handwriting was Margaret's. He had often seen it, and admired its beauty, although she had never before written to him.

Knowing the conditions upon which Mr. Grey had agreed that she should write to him, he hesitated to open it. He knew it must contain bad news of his friend's health.

"But read it, Mr. Haveloc," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who had stood glancing over one or two indifferent letters, while he was hesitating. "You would not stand on ceremony with me."

He tore it open with trembling hands, and read the following lines:—

"I am desired by Mr. Grey to summon you to Ashdale. He is very ill; and I tell you now, because it is easier to write than to speak it; that we must meet and part as strangers.

"MARGARET CAPEL."

CHAPTER XVI.

Que es la vida? Un frenesi;
Que es la vida? Una ilusion,
Una sombra, una ficcion,
Y el mayor bien es pequeño.
Que toda la vida es sueño,
Y los sueños, sueño son."

LA VIDA ES SUENO, JORN. 2.

NOTHING could exceed his astonishment and distress as he read this short and decided missive. He stood speechless—rooted to the ground—for a few moments unable to believe his eye-sight. He would have staked more than his life upon Margaret's constancy; and at such a time to break with him—now, when her uncle lay, perhaps, dying. There was a refinement in

her cruelty. He could not comprehend a word; and stood staring in bewilderment on the paper in his hand.

"I fear you have received some bad news, Mr. Haveloc?" said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, looking anxiously at him.

"I have—very bad," he said. "My friend, Mr. Grey, is very ill; dangerously, I am sure. I must not lose a moment: he has summoned me. I must set out instantly."

They exchanged a hurried farewell; and in another hour he was flying along the road as fast a four horses, and postilions, bribed to the utmost, could whirl his carriage.

He still held in his hand the letter which had summoned him to Ashdale. He read it again and again.

What could have occasioned this sudden change? He was lost in conjecture and dismay.

At one moment he thought it possible that some news might have reached her of

his attendance upon Aveline; and that she misinterpreted his visits into a devotion that had never swerved from herself. But he at once rejected this supposition as impossible.

Had she mistaken his conduct in that particular, she would have demanded an explanation. Nothing need have deterred her from doing so. She had heard from some officious friend of his attentions to Mrs. Maxwell Dorset, whose memory he frequently cursed, but never with such fervour as now. And her delicacy prevented her alluding to the cause of her resentment.

Anger succeeded here to distress. If she could cast him off for an affair which took place before he had become acquainted with her, she certainly was not worth the regret which he could not, however, entirely stifle. If her love could be snapped like a thread the moment she entertained any cause of displeasure against him, it was not worth preserving.

It was the most singular, certainly, the most unjustifiable step he had ever heard of. However, he had nothing to do but to acquiesce. It was not his part to overcome her unreasonable scruples. No ! he thanked Heaven, he could take the matter as coolly as she appeared to do. Her commands were certainly expressed with the utmost brevity — he supposed she did not consider him worth the waste of many words. Some ladies could dismiss a lover with more ease than a lap-dog. He commended her decision, and there was an end of the matter.

Having come to these reflections, he threw himself with great dignity into a corner of the carriage, and attempted to go to sleep.

Not succeeding in this attempt, the next best thing was to discover that he was going at a snail's pace, and to fly in a passion with the post-boys ; and to work himself up into a fever of excitement that increased every mile of the way.

Suddenly he recollected the Will that he had induced Mr. Grey to make—a Will that deprived Margaret of what would have undoubtedly been her inheritance.

How little had he ever thought that any circumstance could occur which would lead him to regret such an arrangement. Now it must be cancelled without delay—a new Will made.

Good Heaven, if he should be too late! And he let down the front glasses, and bestowed another exordium on the postillions.

At last he reached Ashdale. It was one o'clock in the morning; the doors were opened as soon as the horses' feet were heard, a plain proof that he had been anxiously expected. He threw himself from the carriage and hurried up to the servant in the hall.

"Mr. Grey—"

"He is very ill, Sir; not expected to live till morning."

"Not till morning—good Heaven! and that Will—" he muttered to himself as he

rushed up-stairs. He thought more of Margaret than of Mr. Grey even then. Margaret was seated at the bedside close to her uncle's pillow; as still and as white as a figure moulded in wax. Her eyes were fixed upon his face; one hand rested in his; the other hung listless by her side. Mr. Casement stood leaning against the foot of the bed, looking, to do him justice, very disconsolate. Margaret lifted up her heavy eyes, and gave one look at Mr. Haveloc. He was in mourning; a token of respect he had thought proper to pay Aveline; the sight sent a thrill to her heart.

She leaned over her uncle, and kissed his forehead.

"My dear uncle, Mr. Haveloc," she whispered.

Mr. Haveloc stepped close to the bed, and took Mr. Grey's hand, which Margaret resigned to him.

"Ah, Claude!" said Mr. Grey with a faint smile.

They were the last words he spoke.

Almost directly afterwards he fell into a kind of doze; his eyes half closed.

Mr. Haveloc turned abruptly round, seized Mr. Casement by the arm and led him to the window. He had never addressed Mr. Casement in his life before, and that gentleman might be pardoned for looking extremely surprised on the occasion.

"Tell me—how is he?" said Mr. Haveloc.

"Anybody might see that with half an eye, I should think," muttered Mr. Casement more gruffly than usual, for he had a great mind to cry.

"Good Heaven, can nothing be done!" exclaimed Mr. Haveloc clasping his hands.

"Nothing at all," returned Mr. Casement. "The doctor left at eight o'clock, and Mr. Warde at ten. When the doctor and parson both go, I take it, there is an end of everything."

"Good Heaven! and I have something of the last importance to communicate to him!" exclaimed Mr. Haveloc.

"Ah, youngster! clever of you to leave it to the last," said Mr. Casement.

"Good Heaven! when I was away—when I did not know it before. It concerns his niece—"

"Oh! some rigmarole about Miss Peggy you may tell it to me. I am appointed one of her guardians."

Mr. Haveloc turned abruptly away, and stood by the bed-side, watching Mr. Grey with eager interest. At length, he thought it just possible that Margaret might have arranged everything with her uncle before writing to him.

"Did your uncle know of the resolution you announced to me in your letter of yesterday?" he asked coldly.

"Hush! no. Don't speak to him;" said Margaret shrinking back with an appearance of terror.

He sighed, and moved to a little distance from her chair. Mr. Casement came close to the bed, and he saw that all would soon be over.

Margaret sat paralysed with fear, watching the peculiar and earnest expression of the countenance which marks that when the senses are sealed, the soul is still awake, and waiting to be released. And it is at once awful and sublime when no pause or cessation of consciousness takes place, and the spirit steps from one existence to the other without an interval of slumber.

"Come little woman—come away;" said Mr. Casement taking her hand and raising her from her chair, "you can do nothing more. He will never see, or know any one again."

She had no power to resist; she would have opposed nothing. She suffered him to lead her in silence from the room; and so was spared the last appalling moment when the spirit vanishes from its human abode.

CHAPTER XVII.

Is there no more but parting left, of all
The love we bore each other? Is it easy
So to break trust and faith? Are all the tales
Of constancy, that make the heart beat high,
Mere fables?—Then, indeed, farewell!—'tis time.

ANON.

The next morning Mr. Warde came early to Ashdale, and finding that all was over, he took Margaret home with him to the Vicarage.

She had sat up all night, and what with fasting and want of sleep, she was perfectly exhausted.

Mrs. Somerton and Blanche were at the Vicarage, and they were both very kind to Margaret. Indeed, many women not very

deserving of respect in their general conduct, are ready to show kindness to others under actual suffering.

Mrs. Somerton insisted on Margaret going to bed at once, and Blanche brought some tea to her bed-side as soon she was undressed. She kept her bed for some days. All that she had lately endured, unnerved her completely; and when, at length, she made the effort to rise, her limbs trembled so much, that it was with the utmost difficulty that she could get down stairs; and there seated in an arm-chair, she remained for some hours every day, unable to undergo the fatigue of speaking, or even of listening to what was passing.

When Mr. Grey's Will was read, it was found that he bequeathed his estate to his cousin, Mr. Trevor of the East India Company's service; an annuity to one or two servants; and a legacy of ten thousand pounds to his niece Margaret Capel. Margaret was very much affected when Mr. Warde told her this piece of news; she

repeated over and over again how very kind it was of her uncle to have left her this money; a trait which pleased Mr. Warde very much, for he was afraid she would have been very greatly disappointed that her uncle had not left her the bulk of his property. However, a great many people kindly undertook to be disappointed for her; and to say that it was a shame in Mr. Grey, after having her to live with him, to treat her in that manner, and cut her off with ten thousand pounds; and that old people never knew how to leave their money so as to give satisfaction to their relations; which is true enough.

Nobody knew that it was Margaret's own fault; that she was in the secret, and that a word from her, after her rupture with Mr. Haveloc, would have caused her uncle to alter his Will, and settle all his property upon her; but her one aim was to spare him the knowledge of an event which would give him pain; she never thought about securing his fortune. Mr. Warde

told her that he and Mr. Casement were named as her guardians until she married or became of age; and that he thought her best plan would be to reside with some lady who might be able to offer her a comfortable home, and desirous to profit by the arrangement; that such a person would be easily found, but that he trusted for the present she would remain at the Vicarage; so that they might look about at their leisure, and select the residence that should present the most advantages. Margaret thanked him very much for his kindness; for the future she felt a sort of vague indifference. She acceded, at once, to his plans, and hardly gave another thought to her prospects.

Blanche Somerton who had been excessively kind, even delicate in her attentions, until after the funeral of Mr. Grey, now began to think that Margaret's languid sorrow was a little out of place. She was one of the many who think that all regrets are quite useless and nonsensical as soon

as the dead are buried. Her own emotions were stormy and brief; and she felt good-naturedly that it was high time to begin to cheer up Margaret's spirits.

"I declare, I envy you of all things;" said she one morning, "with twenty thousand pounds you can surely make a very good match. But it all depends upon where Uncle Warde places you; take my advice and don't go to a Methodist. I would get some dowager at Bath, or Cheltenham to take me out, if I were you. You might meet with something very advantageous at Bath; better I think than in London. There is so much competition; though you are certainly very pretty—not that I like you in mourning."

Here Margaret who was reclining languidly in an arm-chair, began to cry, by stealth as it were, wiping her eyes quietly with her handkerchief.

"Oh! my dear, your spirits are wretched," cried Blanche. "You have no idea how it distresses me to see you. You really ought

to go out and amuse yourself; we have all our troubles, I assure you. I sometimes find it very difficult to bear up."

"Yes; I should be selfish, indeed, if I thought myself the only person afflicted," said Margaret. "I am very sorry to hear that you have any immediate cause of distress."

Here Mr. Warde appeared at the doorway; he made a sign to Blanche, and after a few whispered words, that young lady nodded, and went up stairs. Mr. Warde then came up to Margaret, and took a chair by her side.

"My dear," he said, "Mr. Haveloc wishes to see you."

Margaret's heart beat so wildly that she could hardly breathe.

"I thought, as he was an intimate friend of your uncle, I had better prepare you for his visit," said Mr. Warde. "I feared you would be agitated if he came in without being announced."

"Must I see him?" asked Margaret, as soon as she could utter a word.

"Certainly not, if you feel the effort would be too great," said Mr. Warde. "He seemed very anxious to pay his respects to you, before leaving the place. I understand it is his intention to go abroad for some years: and I suppose having met you frequently at your uncle's, he did not wish to quit the country without taking leave of you. But do not, on any account, exert yourself. I will take him a message, if you feel in the least degree unequal to seeing him."

Margaret laid her hand on Mr. Warde's arm as if to detain him. Everything seemed whirling round; she could not hear distinctly his last words; there was a noise and giddiness in her brain. Going abroad! So then all was over; he was as determined as herself to cancel their engagement. She should have liked a little reluctance, a little hesitation; perhaps a little entreaty. But

this was well. She could be proud now—no weakness.

"Is he here?" she asked Mr. Warde.

"Yes, waiting in my study."

"Then let him come directly," said she, "directly; because I am not in a mood for tears now; and because I could not answer for myself half an hour hence."

Mr. Warde pressed her hand, and went out in search of Mr. Haveloc.

Margaret heard his step with a sickening at the heart that she could not control: he came in—bowed, took a seat at some distance; then started up, brought his chair closer, and sat down beside her.

They were both silent, Margaret struggling with her tears. Mr. Haveloc looking on the ground, perfectly uncertain how to begin.

But after a short pause, during which she clasped more tightly the arm of her chair, Margaret forced back her tears, and said in a low tone:—

"We have both lost so much, and so lately, Mr. Haveloc, that we do not find it easy to allude to it."

She had never seen him look so pale, or so wretched, and she felt that she forgave him everything, though she struggled very hard against the feeling. Unconsciously her voice took a softer tone, and her countenance depicted the compassion she felt. But her companion, quite as much offended as grieved, by her rejection, had not the skill to read these signs of a softened resolution.

"I did not intrude upon you with that intention," he said. "I had something to explain to you which is a source of greatdistress to me, but for which I can find no remedy."

Margaret bent forward with much anxiety, Mr. Haveloc proceeded with increased coldness.

"When I had reason to suppose that you intended to honour me with your hand, I requested Mr. Grey to settle his estate upon his next heir, as I imagined I had more

than enough for all our wishes; and I confess, that it pleased my pride to fancy that through my means, alone, the woman whom I loved, should be surrounded by all the luxuries and refinements of life."

"I know," said Margaret. "He told me what had been done. I was glad of it. I cannot think why that should annoy you."

"It pains me to consider myself as the means of having deprived you of a noble fortune," said Mr. Haveloc, "a fortune which I once vainly thought I should have been able to compensate to you. But I was not aware that you knew this, and I feared you should think your uncle fickle or unkind, instead of ascribing the act to my ill-judged reliance—upon the future."

"You acted quite rightly, Mr. Haveloc," said Margaret. "I wished it then, and I am not more disposed to reject it now. Mr. Trevor is a worthy man, with a young family. He will value his inheritance; and I trust only that he will cherish my uncle's memory as warmly as I ever shall."

She found it difficult to keep her voice quite steady, just at the close; but she made a little pause and succeeded.

"As you have not deigned to give me any explanation of your change of purpose," said Mr. Haveloc. "I am at a loss to defend myself; or to plead for what, in truth, is very near my heart. There is, indeed, one passage in my life to which it is possible your motives may refer; in that case, I should, I avow it, be left defenceless. I cannot undo the past!"

"I know it," said Margaret hurriedly; "I should be sorry if—I mean that I wish to forget entirely—all that—I mean, that we were ever on other terms than—"

"I have no doubt that you will succeed perfectly," said Mr. Haveloc, rising from his chair as he spoke.

There was a touch of irony in the remark which stung her to the quick. When all she had undergone, and had yet to endure, was before her, to be told that she would find it easy to forget the past, was unbear-

able. Her heart swelled, but there is a great deal of endurance in a woman; as many people know, for they put it to a pretty good trial.

All the pride in her nature was aroused.

"You have nothing more to say, I believe," said she, drawing herself up.

"I could say a thousand things," he exclaimed, with a passionate change of manner; "if I thought you had the patience to hear me. But you care nothing for my thoughts; and, perhaps, I merit but little consideration. Still from you—but these storms always come from the quarter on which we are least prepared. You scarcely know what you do in casting me off. But I hope I am not so much the slave of circumstances as to be made reckless by misfortune. And you, Margaret, is it—in all the chances of the future—is it likely that any man will love you as I have done?"

Mr. Haveloc!" said Margaret, still more offended.

"And that unhappy Will!" he continued,

"I suffer more from that subject than you would be willing to believe if I were to describe it: one day you will lay that to my other offences—if, indeed, you then can recal my name."

"You do me great injustice in thought," said Margaret. "If it will be any relief to you, let me assure you again that there is nothing in the whole chapter of accidents which could give me so little concern. I am not called upon to bear poverty, recollect."

"Then," said Mr. Haveloc, "we have but to part. How difficult it is to me, no words could speak—but those things which are inevitable, had best be quickly done. So—farewell."

Without another word, or look, or gesture, he rushed out of the room and from the house.

Margaret sat for some time trying to recollect every thing he had said. He had not asked her to forgive him—had simply

said he could not undo the past; he had not begged, as he might have done, that she would give him time and opportunity to retrieve it. It had seemed that he was willing—even anxious, to be set free—he had made arrangements before seeing her, that proved he had decided this to be their last meeting. She was dead—and therefore he might have endeavoured to return to Margaret, if he had desired a reconciliation. But no—she had offended him, and he was too proud to wish it. Margaret tried to think it was best for both; but a sense of agony, amounting almost to suffocation, would not let it be. If she could have wept—but no tears came—so she lay helplessly in her chair, watching the ebony cabinet that stood opposite first receding farther and farther, then seemed to float before her eyes, until sense and memory went out together, and she fell into a deep swoon.

It was some time before Blanche, who came down as soon as Mr. Haveloc left the

house, could restore Margaret to consciousness. When she succeeded, she was full of condolence.

"What a bore it was, my dear creature," said she, "that you should have had to receive that horrid man. Had it been any one else, it might have done you all the good in the world; for you might have had a nice little flirtation to raise your spirits. But as for him—I hate him; his manners are so abrupt. Of course he began talking of poor dear Mr. Grey. So mal-à-propos."

"He did speak of my uncle," said Margaret.

"I knew it!" exclaimed Blanche. "That was it. I wish there was a nice little dance you could go to; or a concert—but this place is a perfect hermitage; and your mourning too would be a drawback. How beautifully you were dressed at Bessy Gage's wedding. You had a cluster of pink daisies at the side of your bonnet. That was an

excellent match ! I would have almost married old Sir Philip, myself, for the sake of Sherleigh. I say, did Hubert Gage ever make you an offer ?"

Margaret blushed, but astonishment kept her silent.

" Every body says he did," continued Blanche, " and I do not wonder that you refused him. I hate younger sons. Mamma wished me to marry him at one time, but I declined. I almost wish now that I had kept him on, just to pique somebody else. Do you like military men ?"

" No." said Margaret.

" Well, I wonder at that," said Blanche. " I think I could make you change your mind. Did you happen to notice me walking with a young man, in the garden, yesterday before dinner ?"

" No, I was up stairs," said Margaret, faintly.

" Well—if you can manage to walk out to-morrow—do you think you could ? "

"No, I am sure I could not."

"That is a pity, because I often meet him on the S—— road. You would be so much amused with him. He has such spirits, and I should not be jealous, no—Watkins is all my own."

At another time Margaret would have laughed at this declaration; now, she sighed heavily and sank back in her chair.

"You are quite fatigued with that wretch Mr. Haveloc; it was just like my uncle to admit him. However, thank goodness he is going to Russia directly, and will not bore you again. But here comes my uncle; not a word about Watkins, I entreat. We keep it a secret from him, but I will take care that you are in the way the next time he comes to the house."

"I will go up stairs and lie down, if you please," said Margaret, trying to rise. "I am not very well."

Blanche helped Margaret up stairs, and she had another attack of illness, which again confined her to her bed for some days.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How slowly do the hours their numbers spend,
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move!

SPENSER.

Mathilden's Hertz hat niemand noch ergründet—
Doch, grosse Seelen dulden still.

DON KARLOS.

Mrs. Somerton had kindly offered, as soon as ever she learned the particulars of Margaret's situation, to take the charge of her, and treat her like one of her own daughters.

But Mr. Warde did not seize the proposition with the eagerness that it might seem to merit. Perhaps, he thought, that if Margaret was no better treated than Mrs. Somerton's daughters, her life would

not be all sunshine; perhaps he feared that the lady would not scrupulously redeem her pledge; at any rate, he informed his sister decidedly, that it was his intention to place Margaret with some lady who had no children; for he thought it would be difficult, if not impossible, for any other to adjust satisfactorily, the claims of her daughters and her guest. Mrs. Somerton tried to argue the point, but Mr. Warde was firm, and wrote to one or two friends describing the sort of home he desired for Margaret.

Blanche was so much occupied with her military friend, her Watkins, as she called him, that Margaret saw less of her than before. She walked out in every direction in the hope of meeting him, she staid at home all day, if she thought he would call; she took an immense deal of trouble to catch what a good many people would have pronounced to be not worth catching—her Watkins was ignorant, profligate, and silly; and very fortunately for Blanche, he

behaved to her like most other officers ; that is to say, he walked off one fine morning with his regiment, without so much as bidding adieu to his lady love. Margaret knew nothing of this distressing event when she rejoined the family—she had not seen Blanche for the last day or two, and now she found her reclining on the sofa, suffering, as Mrs. Somerton told her, from a nervous attack. "That is hard upon you, Mrs. Somerton," said Margaret, "to have two invalids on your hands. I must make haste and get well to relieve you of part of your charge."

"I am sure, my dear Miss Capel," said Mrs. Somerton, "no invalid ever gave so little trouble as you. I only wish Blanche would imitate your patience."

Margaret drew a low chair to the sofa, and took her work; "are you suffering in your head?" she asked Blanche, in a gentle voice.

"No, not much ; I'm glad you are come down," said she. "It will be somebody

to talk to ; that is a very pretty pattern for a plain collar. I like the black studs down the front. Do you waltz ?" But here the recollection of having waltzed with Lieutenant Watkins overcame her, and she became rather hysterical. Mrs. Somerton scolded her, Blanche got angry, and then order was restored. Mrs. Somerton took Margaret to the window, and whispered to her the state of the case, and then Blanche called out to her, mother and scolded her for having told Margaret when she wanted to tell her all about it herself. Margaret turning her eyes full of wonder from one to the other, could scarcely comprehend that Blanche was suffering from a disappointment ; she contrasted the total desolation of her own feelings, with the frivolous annoyance that the other seemed to endure, and could understand nothing of the case.

Quiet was again restored. Mrs. Somerton plied her worsted work. Margaret netted in silence. Blanche, lying on the

sofa, was eating French chocolate. Presently Mrs. Somerton began to count aloud the stitches in the bunch of grapes, she was working, "thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight, thirty-nine."

A burst of crying from Blanche, louder than anything Margaret had heard, except from a baby; Mrs. Somerton had inadvertently named the number of Mr. Watkins's regiment.

The fresh scolding, fresh sobs, and, at last, a glass of sal-volatile, tranquillised her spirits for the present.

It must be admitted that such scenes were rather fatiguing to a young girl in bad health, and suffering deeply from the reality of which this was but the shadow.

She learned, however, to set some value upon her own power of self-command. She could not help feeling that the unrestrained sorrow of Blanche lost in dignity what it gained in publicity.

Mason knew all about it; and frequently alluded to poor Miss Somerton with pity;

and to Mr. Watkins with all the violence which a waiting-woman is pretty sure to feel towards a man who has thwarted a young lady in her laudable endeavours to get married.

In two or three days Margaret was happy to find that Blanche could talk of waltzing without a sigh; and her mamma might safely count threads from thirty to forty without awakening any painful reflections.

But their ensued another annoyance to poor Margaret. Whenever she was alone with Blanche, which was the greatest part of the day, Mr. Watkins was the one topic of conversation.

When she had heard all about his boots, and his eyes, and his way of carving a chicken, and his wastefulness in gloves, (a great merit in the eyes of Blanche,) she naturally hoped that they had come to an end of the list; but it is quite surprising the number of little anecdotes which this gentleman furnished.

There were all his jokes to repeat; and these were so exceedingly stupid, that they really did make Margaret smile sometimes. And then there were several stories of dishonest actions, which she was expected to laugh at, but which she could not, for very disgust.

Once he had taken in a Jew; this was his chef-d'œuvre; and twice he had cheated a friend in the sale of a horse; and Blanche thought this greatly enhanced his merit, and her loss.

She became rather tearful when she mentioned the last theft; but she presently recovered herself, and turned the conversation upon a satin pelisse she was about to buy. In fact, the future and the past pretty equally divided her mind. The loss of Mr. Watkins, and the arrangement of her dresses for the autumn.

"Do you know, the last time poor Watkins called, he was so intoxicated!" cried Blanche. "I was afraid my uncle would have noticed it; but, fortunately, he only

came in for a few minutes; for Watkins staid to luncheon. I never shall forget his trying to carve the cold lamb."

"Then that was the reason," said Margaret, hesitating, "that you broke with him."

"Mercy on me, my dear! where were you brought up;" cried Blanche, laughing. "What! break with a man because he was a little intoxicated? Not I, believe me!"

Margaret found plenty of things to astonish her in Miss Somerton; but she was a little more startled than usual at this remark.

She thought of the disgust she would have felt if she had ever seen Mr. Haveloc intoxicated. She viewed Blanche's attachment as a sort of natural phenomenon.

Mr. Watkins lasted about a fortnight; during that time very few things could be said or done without suggesting to Blanche some little anecdote of this gentleman; and as these tales generally tended to set

forth either some deficiency, or some positive vice in that faithless person; sometimes calling in question his spelling, and sometimes his morality, Margaret felt often desirous to turn the subject for very shame; but Blanche informed her that it was a comfort to talk about him, and she could not reasonably refuse her that source of consolation.

At the end of the fortnight, Blanche admitted to Mrs. Somerton, that "Watkins" had a red nose. This had been a point strongly contested between mother and daughter for the last fourteen days previous; for Mrs. Somerton thought it her duty to depreciate a man who had failed to make her daughter an offer; and Blanche warmly defended him from a charge which his decided talent for drinking rendered, at least, probable.

The cause of this change was very soon explained. Blanche had found another officer. She had been introduced to him

at a friend's house, and she very soon managed to bring him to the Vicarage.

When he had nothing in the world to do, it was amusing enough to lounge away a morning, flirting with Blanche. This was worse than the other annoyance to Margaret.

It was bad enough to hear incessantly of the absent lover; but now, you had not only to hear of him all day long in his absence, but to bear his presence, at least, three days in the week. And Blanche would insist upon Margaret's keeping her company.

"Don't run away, my dearest creature," said she; "it looks so odd; it really seems as if you thought the man wanted to propose to me."

Margaret had began to enjoy her walks in the pretty garden and quiet meadows of the Vicarage. It was a bright, fresh October. She was always alive to the beauties of the country; but how could she enjoy

the mossy walks and tall rustling trees with the constant fear of being joined by that tiresome Mr. Compton. And then, if she sat, Blanche would insist on sitting too. If she said she felt chilly and began to walk again, up started Blanche and her cavalier, and they all three set off walking together.

And this Mr. Compton was afflicted with the most boundless and uncultivated spirits. His laugh was a shriek. He would spring up in the air like a stag; he would fall on the grass, to give vent to his mirth; he talked incessantly, and always the most extravagant nonsense. He would practice dances with Blanche, while poor Margaret played to them; and then, at every mistake, there were fresh fits of laughter, which made him stamp about the room until they subsided.

Margaret at first thought him deranged, and was very much afraid of him; but she afterwards found he was only silly; which is a much milder form of lunacy.

Indeed, he was much more silly than his predecessor; for in due time, Blanche managed to receive his hand, and became Mrs. Compton, whether he liked it or not; but this was after Margaret had left them. Perhaps, Margaret would have endured him more cheerfully, had she been able to foresee the finale of his visits. It would have been unkind, indeed, to murmur at the tedious hours which he spent at the Vicarage, which proved a source of such intense delight to Blanche, and such comfortable calculation to her mother.

"Has he not eyes!" exclaimed Blanche, as the door closed upon him after a waltz of two hours.

Margaret (who had officiated as pianiste during that time) admitted that he possessed that feature in the plural number, and knelt down before the fire to warm her hands.

"I have ascertained," said Mrs. Somerton, looking up from her worsted work, "that he *is* the son of Mr. Compton of

Lincolnshire—the second son, it is true, but I understand the mother's property is settled on him ; if that is the case, it may do, but I will write to Mrs. Stacey, she knows all about the Comptons. You know he mentioned Mrs. Stacey as having been staying at his father's."

"I know," said Blanche, "and how he did laugh at her blue gauze turban!—I thought he would have died."

So did Margaret ; though she did not contemplate that event with the dismay that it might awaken in Blanche's mind.

"Only," continued Mrs. Somerton, "don't go too far till we hear from Mrs. Stacey ; he may have nothing."

"I dare say," retorted Blanche, "I shall go as far as I like. I know he has property, and I don't care whether it came from his mother, or from the moon. He was saying, yesterday, what year it was when he came of age. Don't you know, Margaret, how he laughed about his eldest brother coming of age first, and then his coming of age

afterwards; and saying that it was not every family where two brothers come of age? Of course nobody comes of age if they have nothing to come into."

"Certainly, there is something in that," said Mrs. Somerton, resuming her worsted work: while Margaret became possessed of the interesting fact, that time suspends his operations in favour of those forlorn gentlemen and ladies only, who have no means of bribing his delay; and truly they should have something to compensate for an empty pocket.

But Mr Compton was of great use to Margaret, little as she might have been disposed to allow it. If he did not come, Blanche was expecting him all the morning; every horseman, every gig, that passed down the high-road, might be the looked for guest. A broad gravel walk, at the end of the garden, commanded a view of the high-road, and thither Blanche would direct her steps, and loiter from breakfast till luncheon.

"There! that *is* Compton—I am certain, my dear, I know him a mile off; besides, his horse, he rides a bay—now does not he?"

"I do not remember. Yes—I think it was a bay when you took me out to see it," said Margaret.

"Well, then, unless he were riding the black—he has a very fine black horse, which he thinks would carry a lady," said Blanche looking sideways at her companion.

"But that is not Mr. Compton—it is the butcher," said Margaret, with a feeling of satisfaction.

"Oh! true—so it is. I am rather near-sighted. By the bye, I think he said he should be on duty to-day. Did he say to-day or to-morrow?"

"I did not hear him," said Margaret.

"I think it was to day; I am sure I wish he never had any duty!" said Blanche with a sigh.

" He has very little, I should think," said Margaret.

" He gets out of every thing he can, you may be sure," said Blanche, " there—who is in that gig. Only Charles Hollingsworth, I do believe! The greatest bore in England ; sometimes he pretends to be ill, and goes out hunting."

" Who, Mr. Hollingsworth?" said Margaret, quite at a loss to know why he should take that trouble.

" No—Compton—there he really is ; let us go to the gate and meet him."

Then when he came, there was nothing but uproar and confusion for some hours ; Blanche's spirits were easily excited, and what with laughing, waltzing, rushing over the garden after his dogs, and pelting the plums from the trees, and racing about and throwing them at each other, she became quite as noisy as her lover. Mrs. Somerton looked on, scolding them both gently and playfully ; it was quite a family picture.

All this clamour was not very amusing to Margaret, but it drew her thoughts insensibly away from herself, she even became interested in the game. She speculated upon Blanche's chance of success. Her stake was not deep enough to make it a matter of painful anxiety. She would have regretted Mr. Compton, just as much as she had regretted Mr. Watkins; perhaps a few days longer, for he was decidedly the more attractive of the two. He had not a red nose, he did not drink, he was only foolish and extragavant, and very noisy. He treated Margaret with that total disregard to the usual courtesies offered in society to a lady, that may be observed in young men, especially officers, when they are occupied by another woman: but this gave her neither concern nor displeasure. She had long observed that his head was not capable of holding more than one idea at a time, and as Blanche was his idea at present, it was not likely that he should recol-

lect to open the door for Margaret, or to set down her tea-cup.

But she began to look with anxiety towards a more settled home—the society here was not to her taste. She saw very little of Mr. Warde, and she was not allowed to pass her time in his library; she was always wanted to be present with Blanche and Mr. Compton. She longed for quiet, for study; for a life that should replace that which she had lost.

CHAPTER XIX.

No more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day
Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope, I seek the cottaged dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray;

COLERIDGE.

MARGARET was cheered during this tedious interval by several very kind letters from Lady d'Eyncourt. As soon as she heard of Mr. Grey's death, she wrote to Margaret a letter full of deep feeling and sympathy. She said that when she returned to England, she counted on Margaret's taking up her abode at Sherleigh, unless before that time she was fixed in a home of her own. She was happier than most married women can expect to be, for

she was not separated from her father. Captain Gage was now at Paris, with the D'Eyncourts, and he had agreed to travel with them, as long as they remained on the continent. Elizabeth mentioned in one of these letters, that her brother Hubert had sailed for South America, and that her father was very glad to get him out of the country; but it was evident that she did not know who had influenced his decision.

Margaret was cheered by this intelligence. She would have dreaded meeting him again, at least, for some time to come; and she was glad to find that she had been able to do some good by her advice.

One morning, Mr. Warde begged Margaret to come into his library as he wished to speak to her on business. Blanche and Mr. Compton were playing at battledore and shuttlecock, and she was not sorry to escape from their noisy enjoyment for a few minutes. Mr. Warde then told her that he had made several inquiries for such

a home as he thought might be agreeable to Margaret; that he had found it rather difficult to meet one in all respects satisfactory. But that he had just received a letter from his friend, Mr. Fletcher, that he thought was worth considering about. Mr. Fletcher, if she remembered, was the clergyman to whom he had applied when her uncle desired to take a house by the seaside.

Yes; Margaret recollected the name. She breathed short; one of those feelings called presentiments came over her. She knew perfectly what was coming.

"It seems," continued Mr. Warde, glancing at the letter, "that a lady in his neighbourhood has lately lost an only daughter, and she has been strongly urged to receive an inmate into her house; she is much averse to a companion in the usual sense of the term, but upon Mr. Fletcher stating to her the sort of home I was anxious to obtain for you, she seemed

willing to receive you. You know the neighbourhood, and you are fond of fine scenery, but I must warn you that this lady lives absolutely without society. She is very well connected, but she has retired from the world."

The world—of which her short experience had been so bitter. That, indeed, was an inducement; and Aveline's mother—there was a sort of strange charm to her in the idea.

"I think I should like it," she faltered.

"This lady is a highly cultivated and intellectual woman," said Mr. Warde, "and I think you will appreciate the advantage of her conversation; no lessons are of such real benefit to a young person, as constant intercourse with a superior mind. And her principles are such as you know how to value and respect."

"Let me go to her," said Margaret.

"Can you make up your mind to solitude?" asked Mr. Warde.

"Oh! yes—yes."

"Then I will write to Mrs. Fitzpatrick, and conclude the arrangement."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Blanche, when Margaret repeated to her what had been determined upon. "I wonder what my uncle thinks women are intended for; that is to say, pretty women. Of course, ugly women ought to be buried alive. But the idea of sending you into a wilderness like that. Oh! you like it? Don't tell me—I won't believe you; how are you to get married I should like to know?"

"But I have no intention of marrying," said Margaret. "I intend to remain single."

"You don't mean to—oh! I understand," returned Blanche. "A good many girls say so; but I always think it is better not, for fear the men should take you at your word."

"I wish to be taken at my word," said Margaret quietly.

"So it really would seem," said Blanche,

"by your suffering my uncle to dispose of you in that way. Oh! I wanted to tell you; my uncle begins to think it odd, that Compton comes here so much. I believe he was afraid that you were his attraction, and it is his business to look sharp after your money, you know."

Margaret could not repress a feeling of disgust, but she tried to look as if Mr. Compton's assiduities would not be very offensive to her. Blanche went on.

"I soon set him right on that point, and then he actually asked mamma, if she was quite assured of Mr. Compton's principles. He said he hoped he had no particular prejudice against the army, but he thought their manner of living was seldom such as to gain them much respect in any neighbourhood where they might be quartered. How I did laugh!"

"But do you not then think principles of any importance?" asked Margaret.

"No, my dear, of course not," returned Blanche. "I think Compton very hand-

some, and if he were a Roman Catholic, it would make no difference to me."

Margaret did not think it of any use to explain that a Roman Catholic might possibly have high religious principles, and a Protestant, none at all, so she was silent.

"I told Compton about the principles," continued Blanche, "and you should have heard how he laughed; I thought he would have died."

This must have been a prevalent fear among Mr. Compton's friends whenever he favoured them with a burst of laughter.

"However," said Blanche, "Compton told me to set my uncle's mind at rest as soon as I liked, for that he was 'the same religion that every body else was.'"

The grammatical arrangement of this sentence was, perhaps, its least charm. So profound a knowledge of the various doctrinal shades then agitating the world must have been very cheering to Mr. Ward's feelings.

"And," said Blanche, "even Compton says that it is a great shame you should be banished to that stupid place in —— shire. For he says you are exceedingly pretty, only too quiet for his taste. You don't mind, I hope?" added Blanche, fearful that these last words would be too severe a blow.

No. Margaret thought she should manage to survive this expression of Mr. Compton's opinions, in common with several others, with which he had made her acquainted from time to time; and of which, perhaps the most striking was, that "he hated black, and he thought it a shame for women to wear it." And on being reminded that it was sometimes indispensable, he then thought it "a shame for people to die."

Nothing refreshed Margaret so much as a letter from Elizabeth. She seemed to come in contact with another order of mind. Elizabeth never thought or spoke a littleness, and however short, or however

general her letter might be, the nobleness of her nature seemed to find its way into the handwriting.

In a letter Margaret received from her at this time, she mentioned that they had been surprised, at Paris, by a flying visit from Mr. Evan Conway. He was on his road to the Pyrenees; and had been disappointed of his travelling companion. Mr. Haveloc had arranged to go with him, and suddenly sent him an excuse, saying that some recent occurrences had rendered him unfit for society. "This tribute to the memory of your uncle, my dear Margaret, I am sure will please you, added Elizabeth. I always thought Mr. Haveloc's character no ordinary one; but this is a depth of feeling which we rarely meet in the present day.

"He has started off alone for St. Petersburg, and has left a good many English mammas to conjecture whether he will bring home a Russian wife."

Elizabeth added that the rest of the

Conway family were in Germany, where they seemed likely to remain some time.

Margaret pondered long over the intelligence contained in this letter. Was it solely grief for her uncle's loss that made Mr. Haveloc decline the society of his friend? Did no remorse for his falsehood to herself mingle with his regrets? Did he suffer half what she endured? She knew nothing, she should never know anything of his feelings. They were parted for ever; and, perhaps, as Elizabeth said, he might bring home a Russian wife.

This idea cost her many tears, though she constantly repeated to herself that she had no longer any interest in his future.

Mr. Warde received a favourable answer from Mrs. Fitzpatrick. From his account of Miss Capel, she felt assured of her own satisfaction in the arrangement. She only feared that so young a person would soon be wearied of the monotony of her residence. On this point, Margaret was sanguine. She had much pleasure in telling Mason that

the day of her departure was fixed. Mason lifted up her eyes ; even Ashdale was better than the place they were going to : " but it did not become her to complain."

Margaret bought the costliest bracelet that the jeweller in S—— could furnish as an offering for Blanche before she left.

" Accept it as a wedding present," she said, " I trust it may prove so, if it is for your happiness."

Blanche was in raptures—she dearly loved trinkets, and a bracelet of the newest fashion glittering with precious stones, and costing more guineas than she ever possessed at a time, was almost enough to disturb her brain. She ran from room to room to show it to everybody ; she put it on ; she took it off and shut it in its morocco case. She embraced Margaret, she laughed, she waltzed, and finally was able to reply to Margaret's remark.

" You dear creature—that is the kindest thing you could say ! A wedding present ! Yes ! I will believe it ; he has said nothing,

but I understand what he means. Did you ever happen to observe his nose in profile ?"

Margaret had merely remarked that there was something elegant in the sharpness of his features that seemed at variance with the excessive ignorance of his mind ; but she forbore giving so candid a statement of facts. She merely said she was willing to take for granted that Mr. Compton shone in that position.

It happened, that the evening before she left Ashdale, she was in her own room overlooking Mason, who was putting the finishing touches to her packing, when she saw Mrs. Somerton and Mr. Compton walking together in the avenue that shaded one side of the garden.

Mrs. Somerton seemed very earnest ; Mr. Compton greatly embarrassed. Sometimes he relieved himself by trying to bite through his cane ; sometimes he caught at the few leaves which hung on the boughs overhead. He looked the picture of

awkwardness. But suddenly, Mrs. Somerton stopped short, and shook hands with him fervently, and they walked together towards the house.

Margaret set off too early the next morning to have any opportunity of learning whether Mrs. Somerton had succeeded in bringing Mr. Compton to confession, on that memorable evening; but about two months afterwards, she received a couple of cards bound together with silver twist, and bearing the names of Mr. and Mrs. Compton, which led her to believe that she had chanced to witness the crisis of the affair.

It was a wretched autumn day on which she set out for her new home. All the fine weather seemed to have vanished at once. It was cold and windy, and the rain fell steadily. Margaret was glad of the company of Mason in the carriage. She tried not to think of the past or the future—she tried to forget her first coming to Ashdale, not a year ago; of that solitude she had been led to expect; and of the

whole life-time of events she had gone through in those months. Some of these could never occur again, she thought. She could never lose another relative. Mr. Grey was the last she possessed. She could never love again, and therefore could never be again deceived. Come what may, she thought, the future would be more tranquil than the past. Yet she looked forward with great anxiety to her first interview with Mrs. Fitzpatrick. Her shyness came back with more force than ever; she dreaded the termination of her journey; and her heart stood still with affright when the opening of gates, and the barking of dogs warned her that she had arrived at the cottage.

She saw a tall figure in black standing in the doorway, handsome, pale, like Lady Constance before her distraction. It was her hostess, come to welcome her upon the threshold:—that picturesque but obsolete custom.

"I am afraid, my dear, you had a very

rough day for your journey," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick as she led her to the drawing-room.

There was nothing in the words, but the voice seemed to dispel her fears in a moment. She looked up with a smile, though her eyes were filled with tears.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick felt it as difficult to be composed as Margaret, but they both had learned the hard task of self-command.

"It was dreary," said Margaret. "The fire is very pleasant."

She sat down, and looked round the drawing-room. The curtains were drawn before the window where she had seen Aveline on the last evening of her life. There was the sofa on which she was lying; she recalled the gesture of Mr. Haveloc, turning from her to raise one of the pillows.

She shuddered.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was seated at the table engaged in making the tea. She was exceedingly pale, and her dark eye-brows

gave almost an air of severity to her face, except when she smiled.

"Still cold?" said she turning round with one of those beautiful smiles; "you will not be really warm until you have had some tea. Will you come to the table, or shall I bring it to you?"

Margaret laid aside her bonnet, and drew a chair to the table. Mrs. Fitzpatrick was exceedingly struck by her beauty, and the gracefulness of her action, particularly with that exquisite brightness of complexion, which results not so much from fairness as from a peculiar texture of the skin. It has been likened by a poet to "the dim radiance floating round a pearl."

They parted for the night, greatly pleased with each other. And our first impressions are seldom false to us, if we take care not to reason upon them. Reason and fancy are good separate guides; but I know not how it is, they never work well together. But Margaret did not attempt to philoso-

phise upon the matter. She laid her head upon her pillow with a vague but delightful consciousness, that she had found at last a tranquil home.

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